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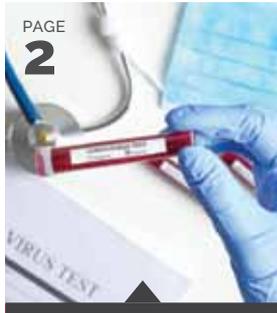
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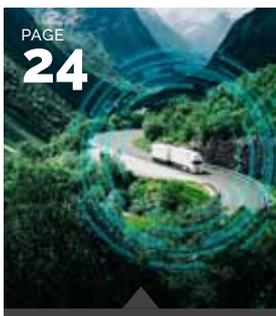
Each month, we interview a captain of our industry. This month, we chat to Roberto Cortes, CEO of Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus.



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The time of autonomous vehicles is nigh. We discover that the forestry industry is also jumping onto this bandwagon.



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Russian rally raid driver Andrey Karginov took top honours in the 2020 Dakar Rally in the truck category for Kamaz. We meet him.



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Recently, we travelled to the Spanish port city of Bilbao for the global debut of MAN's new truck generation and a seat at the highly sought-after VIP event celebrating its arrival.

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MAN Automotive is determined to remain right on top of the after-sales game. See page 12



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Unit 17, Northcliff Office Park, 203 Beyers Naude Drive, Northcliff, 2195.
P O Box 957, Fontainebleau, 2032, South Africa
Tel: 011 782 1070 | Fax: 011 782 1073 /0360

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Charleen Clarke
Cell: 083 601 0568
charleen@focusontransport.co.za
womanonwheelsza

PUBLISHER

Tina Monteiro
Cell: 082 568 3181
tina@focusontransport.co.za

SUB-EDITOR
Jeanette Lamont
jeanette@charmont.co.za

TECHNICAL CORRESPONDENT
Vic Oliver
Cell: 083 267 8437
voliver@mweb.co.za

CONTRIBUTORS
Mike Fitzmaurice
Peter Lamb
Yasmine Wilson
Vaughan Mostert

ADVERTISING SALES
Atish Ramachul
Cell: 061 320 2210
atish@focusontransport.co.za

Diana Gouws
Cell: 082 801 8506
diana@charmont.co.za

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Bev Rogers
Cell: 078 230 5063
bev@focusontransport.co.za

DESIGN AND LAYOUT
Nelio da Silva
nelio@focusontransport.co.za

PRINTING
Camera Press

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[@womanonwheelsza](#)

CHARLEEN CLARKE is editorial director of **FOCUS**. While she is based in Johannesburg, she spends a considerable amount of time overseas, attending international transport events – largely in her capacity as associate member of the International Truck of the Year Jury.

IF WE FAIL, OUR COUNTRY DIES

AS I WRITE THIS STORY, THERE ARE 230 051 CONFIRMED CORONAVIRUS CASES WORLDWIDE AND 9 388 DEATHS. SOUTH AFRICA'S INFECTION RATE – AT 150 – STILL SEEMS QUITE SMALL (THANK GOODNESS). I HAVE HEARD LOTS OF HYSTERICAL RANTINGS AND I'VE ENCOUNTERED LOTS OF PANIC-STRIKEN PEOPLE. AMID ALL THIS HYSTERIA, ONE THING IS MISSING: NO ONE IS TALKING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR INDUSTRY

Until now. I'm going to talk about how important and how utterly invaluable our industry is right now. If we don't stand together and "deliver the goods", chaos will ensue!

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni has said that all efforts should be geared towards ensuring that the already weak domestic economy "does not grind to a halt".

I concur (although I'm not really seeing any efforts being made, to be honest). However, closer to home, I think it's utterly essential for us to band together as an industry and – quite frankly – do our jobs.

Let me explain. As thousands of people start self-isolating or avoiding all social contact, online shopping will grow. Those goods will need to be delivered by trucks or vans. So, too, will the respirators that we order from goodness-knows-where. The trillions of hand sanitisers and masks will require transport. So, too, will the medical supplies for those people who are hospitalised or are recovering at home.

It is going to be up to the van and truck suppliers to ensure that they can deliver. The National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (Naamsa) has said that all local original equipment manufacturers "will continue to work very closely with their supply chain component manufacturers and partners to monitor developments locally and globally".

It maintains that there are currently no planned disruptions to any manufacturing lines across the country. When it comes to the truck plants, we hope that this is a situation that continues. Of course, it will be up to the local councils (God help us) to ensure that the new vehicles are registered and declared roadworthy.



When new products aren't available (and we suspect that this could be the case), it will be up to the vehicle hire companies to ensure that they will be able to meet customer demand.

Truck and van drivers face a massive challenge; they cannot work from home. Coincidentally, Vic Oliver wrote about driver health long before the coronavirus pandemonium hit town. (You can find his article on page eight of this issue.) What are companies doing to ensure that their van, bus and truck drivers remain healthy and coronavirus free?

The many vans and trucks that are on our roads could break down. What is happening at workshop level? Are technicians going home because they're petrified of catching the virus? Are companies coming up with plans to ensure that trucks and vans can always be returned to the road?

What about the people within our industry (and others for that matter) getting to work? The Southern African Bus Operators Association (Saboa) says it is working with the National Department of Transport (DoT) to develop a workable Public Transport Plan that is focused on ensuring the health and safety of the public transport community.

"In this regard, we have made

detailed proposals to the DoT to try and mitigate the risk that public transport presents in spreading the coronavirus," its spokesman tells us. Saboa is confident that the DoT will take the necessary action to ensure the safety of all commuters. We hope that the organisation is right.

We don't know how the scenario will play itself out. There's only one thing that we can say: if we, as an industry, drop the ball then people will die. So, too, will our country's economy. We cannot let that happen. **F**



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MIKE FITZMAURICE is the CEO of the Federation of East and Southern Africa Road Transport Associations (Fesarta). He has 42 years of experience in the transport and logistics industry with several major companies in South Africa, as well as overseas exposure with some of the leading transport companies in six European countries. He runs Transport Logistics Consultants, which he established in 2004. In May 2015 he became CEO of Fesarta.

ONE STOP BORDER POSTS: CAN THEY WORK?

BEITBRIDGE IS SET TO FOLLOW IN CHIRUNDU'S FOOTSTEPS AS A ONE STOP BORDER POST IF RELEVANT CHANGES ARE NOT IMPLEMENTED

In a recent media release on February 9, the Minister of Home Affairs Aaron Motsoaledi announced that Beitbridge – the busiest border post in southern Africa – would operate as a One Stop Border Post (OSBP) from 2024. It could, however, follow in the footsteps of Chirundu, which became the first OSBP in Africa in December 2009, if relevant changes are not implemented.

Hailed as a success and promoted as the iconic OSBP in Africa, Chirundu OSBP has failed miserably and no longer functions as an OSBP, with cross-border times in excess of two days. This is unlike the East African Community (EAC) countries where more than 10 OSBPs developed since 2014 have shown drastic time reductions of up to 80 percent.

What has happened in the EAC region that we can't get right in southern Africa? It's quite simple:

The principles of efficiency:

- Total commitment and cooperation between heads of states in the EAC region;
- The rapid implementation of OSBPs;
- The reduction in the number of weighbridge stations and police checkpoints along the corridors;
- A single permit and a yellow card insurance system recognised by all member states;
- One cross-border charge or fee applicable in all member states;

- Massive time reductions in excess of 50 percent at the newly implemented OSBPs;
- Introduction of the Single Customs Territory system in all EAC countries - payment of duties at point of origin; and
- A regional Bond being phased in to replace the National Transit Bond system.

Why can't we get this right in southern Africa? Again, it's quite simple:

The principles for failure:

- No political will among the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Every member state has its own agenda;

duplication of weighing. As a result, trucks are weighed several times along the corridor;

- The SADC has not yet introduced a single insurance system that is acceptable to all member states;
- Multiple and exorbitant cross-border charges on entry to each SADC member state along the corridor;
- Massive increase in cross-border times in excess of 50 percent, due to ongoing customs ICT system downtimes, chaotic procedures and processes, and lack of traffic management skills resulting in queues at the border posts in excess of five to 30 km at times;
- No single window system that links all customs ICT systems along the



- No funds for the development of OSBP infrastructure. As a result, we are stuck with antiquated infrastructure that does not support streamlined procedures and processes, and that is not conducive to fast track traffic flows;
- No reduction in the number of weighbridges or police checkpoints in the region. The number of police checkpoints has increased and weighbridge systems are antiquated and not linked to avoid

full length of the corridors; and

- The SADC has not yet introduced a Regional Bond system to replace the cumbersome outdated National Transit Bond system.

The Beitbridge OSBP is unlikely to succeed without the changes implemented by the EAC. Can it be fixed before it's too late? Yes, it can, and this will be discussed in Driving Africa in the next issue of **FOCUS** on Transport. **F**



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PETER LAMB is a director in the Norton Rose Fulbright admiralty and shipping team, based in Durban. A qualified attorney, Lamb has an LLM in shipping law from the University of Cape Town. Associate designate **YASMINE WILSON** is a shipping and logistics lawyer based in Durban. Her areas of expertise include international trade, admiralty litigation, customs and excise, as well as advising on charter parties, bulk cargo purchase and sale agreements.

RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

THE WORLD IS CURRENTLY DOMINATED BY CONCERNS AROUND COVID-19, THE EFFECTS OF WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO BE FELT FOR SOME TIME. FROM A RISK MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE, THE LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN SECTORS MUST CONSIDER THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THEIR CURRENT AND FUTURE BUSINESS OPERATIONS

In the event that disruptions caused by Covid-19 make it difficult for participants in the logistics and supply chain sectors to meet their obligations, will Covid-19 constitute a “force majeure” event under South African law?

A force majeure is an act of God, or man, that is unforeseeable and out of the reasonable control of one or both of the parties to a contract, and which

makes it objectively impossible for one or both of the parties to perform their obligations under the contract.

These specific circumstances and criteria need to be met for force majeure to be relied on to suspend obligations under a contract. Relying on force majeure to suspend or cancel a contract, but failing to meet these criteria, could result in specific performance or damages claims being brought against that party.

Participants have already been affected by Covid-19 with cancellation of sales contracts, supply chain and shipping contracts and/or the late delivery of cargo. In many instances, the loss will lie where it falls.

In most cases, parties to these contracts will not have claims against one another for non- or late delivery – either because their contracts contain appropriately worded force majeure clauses, or because their losses are purely consequential and not recoverable under the contract.

INSURANCE

Insurance is a risk management tool often relied upon in these circumstances. Participants have to look to their insurance policies to ascertain whether or not the loss is covered. Whether a claim properly lies under a policy will depend on the circumstances and the wording of that policy.

Generally speaking, however, the claims will not lie under a typical marine insurance goods policy concluded on Institute Cargo Clause (A) or similar terms. Participants may also look to their liability or business interruption policies.

The analysis of these policies is beyond the scope of this article. Save to say that there is no general rule that exists as to whether or not cover lies under those policies; each case will have to be determined on its merits.

FUTURE

Participants in the logistics and supply chain sectors need to assess their risk by reviewing contractual arrangements, and by ensuring that their force majeure clauses are appropriately worded in future contracts.

Losses arising out of a pandemic often far exceed the value of the cargo concerned, are unknown at the time of negotiating the insurance policy, and are, in effect, uninsurable in the insurance market.

The best risk management tool is to reconsider existing sale and supply chain contracts and mitigate these risks. If the contract does not offer sufficient protection, then the party must either cancel the contract (if at all possible) or accept a potentially uninsurable risk. **F**





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VIC OLIVER is one of this country's most respected commercial vehicle industry authorities, and has been in this industry for over 50 years. Before joining the FOCUS team, he spent 15 years with Nissan Diesel (now UD Trucks), 11 years with Busaf and seven years with International. Do you have a comment or thought you would like to share based on this column? Visit www.focusontransport.co.za and have your say!

KEEP YOUR TRUCK DRIVER HEALTHY

EARLY SIGNS OF RISING OPERATING COSTS FOR HEAVY VEHICLES IN 2020 ARE CLEARLY EVIDENT. TRUCK AND BUS OWNERS THEREFORE NEED TO TAKE ACTION TO CONTROL AND MINIMISE THESE COSTS

Road transport operators cannot always pass on rising costs to their customers. Therefore, the only way to stay ahead and continue to make a fair profit is to reduce operating costs.

The best people to reduce vehicle operating costs are the men or women behind the wheel, as they have complete control of the vehicle once it leaves the yard. Drivers have a major influence on fuel consumption, tyre wear, brake and clutch life, as well as all the other variables that influence the maintenance and repair costs of a vehicle.

However, even highly qualified and experienced drivers cannot continually drive a vehicle in a professional manner that will reduce costs if they are not fit and healthy. Ensuring that drivers stay healthy should, therefore, be a priority in any transport business.

Truck drivers should be tested annually to ensure that they are not suffering from the two major health problems affecting drivers – diabetes and hypertension. Both these health conditions are extremely dangerous for truck drivers, truck owners and other road users.

Good management of drivers

entails keeping a continual watch on performance and behaviour. Erratic fuel consumption is normally a very good indicator that a driver is losing focus and concentration while driving, due to a health problem.

The tell-tale signs that could indicate that a driver may be suffering from diabetes include that he or she may have a continual thirst and may need to urinate frequently. They might also be tired all the time, overweight and experience blurred vision.

regular intervals; stopping smoking; being physically active, for example, walking for least 30 minutes every day; and strictly following the instructions and advice of medical doctors and dieticians.

Hypertension is the other main health problem affecting truck drivers. Commonly known as the silent killer, it is hard to detect until it is properly measured. A driver cannot afford to have a heart attack or a stroke behind the wheel. It



Drivers who have been identified as having diabetes should not be dismissed, provided that the condition is controlled and a system is implemented to track their health. Wherever possible, however, they should be removed from long-distance routes and allocated trips with shorter distances.

They should also be encouraged to take steps to help them to manage their health. These include eating healthy foods every day at

is, therefore, vital that the blood pressure of all drivers is regularly measured.

The message is clear: for trucking companies to survive and make a fair return, it essential to focus on the reduction of operating costs, and taking care of drivers is the key factor in reducing these costs. It is worth remembering that, in long-distance operations, operating costs can account for approximately 45 percent of total costs. **F**

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VAUGHAN MOSTERT lectured on public transport issues at the University of Johannesburg for nearly 30 years. Through Hopping Off, Mostert leaves readers with some parting food for thought as he continues his push for change in the local public transport industry.

CAR SALES FIGURES – WHO CARES?

WE SHOULD NOT ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DISTRACTED BY IRRELEVANT STATISTICS WHEN IT COMES TO PRIVATE MOTORING

For several years we have been fed a diet of monthly sales figures, such as: “The Collida is up by 2,6 percent. The Crashida is down by 0,7 percent. In February, the Bumpa outsold the Klonka for the first time since June last year.”

Does that really tell us anything? I don't think so, but some people do.

Last month, Mercedes-Benz joined BMW in stopping the reporting of monthly sales figures. This led to a gripe from one journalist, who called it a “blow to the accuracy of official... figures” and noted that “monthly sales information is an important tool for economists, providing a snapshot of consumer confidence, as well as trends in credit demand, affordability and consumer spending”.

That may sound convincing, but confidence and affordability are misused words that fall within the field of psychiatry, not economics. That leaves us with credit demand and consumer spending, which, when used by themselves, mean little.

Economists should rather be working out how much South Africans are actually spending in total on motor cars each year, compare this figure with the country's gross domestic product, and follow up by comparing that percentage with what is spent in other countries.

It won't be easy, because there are very few accurate records of how much is spent on cars, but it's an area



that could do with some investigation.

The economists could try to figure out how much of that total spend goes on the journey to work. My guess is that R600 billion is spent on cars each year, while the journey to work accounts for 50 percent of that amount (R300 billion). Compare that with the approximately R90 billion that goes on minibus taxis, which (I'm guessing again) carry at least as many, if not a lot more people to work than are transported by cars.

South African economists need to look far more closely into this, because poorer people (minibus-taxi users) pay unsubsidised fares, while richer people (car users) benefit from fairly big subsidies to car makers and a low rate of tax on fuel.

By imposing low rates of fuel tax, South Africa is acting as though it is an oil-producing country. However, such countries feel the pain when oil prices go up.

Now that the price of fuel in South Africa has come down slightly, we should be building up a “war chest” to cope with possible big price increases further down the line, and to assist the taxi industry to lower its fares. Do I

hear everyone saying that this would be a recipe for more corruption? Perhaps, but what is the alternative?

Reading between the lines of the interim report put out by the Competition Commission in February, which deals with competition in the public transport industry, it is clear that the Department of Transport has failed the country – at both central and provincial government levels.

Most of the findings of the Competition Commission are already well known. These include the disorganised state of the minibus-taxi industry, the failure of bus rapid transit schemes, the high subsidy paid to the middle-class users of the Gautrain and the need for a common ticket system.

However, the report fails to address the distortion in competition between private and public transport, caused in part by low fuel taxes and the subsidy to the motor industry through the Motor Industry Development Programme.

Until issues such as these are dealt with, it really doesn't matter whether you think a Bugatti is more affordable than a Lamborghini. **F**



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MAN – WITH YOU ALL THE WAY

SEASONED TRUCKERS AROUND THE GLOBE HAVE REGULARLY COMMENTED THAT THE SALES DEPARTMENT SELLS THE FIRST UNIT AND THE AFTER-SALES SERVICE ENSURES THE SALES THAT FOLLOW. MAN AUTOMOTIVE IS VERY MINDFUL OF THIS – WHICH IS WHY THE COMPANY IS DETERMINED TO DELIVER THE VERY BEST AFTER-SALES SERVICE IN THE INDUSTRY

At MAN Automotive, the last three years have seen a multitude of initiatives, which confirm to fleet operators that the company is right on top of the after-sales game. These range from a variety of extended factory warranties and original equipment manufacturer (OEM)-supported repair and maintenance (R&M) contracts to awareness campaigns for genuine MAN parts.

They also include professionalising the Mobile 24 emergency response call centre, guaranteeing cross-border support in neighbouring countries, vehicle-off-road (VOR) escalated decision-making, major service job repair

kits, refurbished parts options and special rates for older trucks (over six years of age).

MAN's head of after-sales services – Eren Gunduz – who also happens to head up the brand's new vehicle sales efforts is clearly upbeat about the company's progress: "MAN's customer satisfaction ratings have improved dramatically when looking at the Competitive Customer Satisfaction survey results as co-ordinated by DataTrack (formerly ScottByers).

"Our quarter-on-quarter performance in after-sales service from the first quarter of 2017 to the fourth quarter of 2019 has shown a significant upward trend, for which we



ABOVE: The customer is central to all of MAN's activities; staff members are committed to providing exceptional after-sales service.

RIGHT: MAN's customer satisfaction ratings have improved dramatically when looking at the Competitive Customer Satisfaction survey results as coordinated by DataTrack (formerly ScottByers).

wish to thank our customers and front-line teams," he enthuses.

It is, arguably, also this customer response in satisfaction levels that has enabled MAN Automotive to almost double its extra-heavy market share over the last four years – moving from just over eight percent of the extra-heavy sales pool to just shy of 14 percent of the South African market.

"Clearly MAN's product performance has found favour with more and more customers. Furthermore, our range of after-sales services on offer is talking to uptime and reduced total cost of ownership (TCO).

"What should also be noted is that the 2019 market-share result came in a year where we no longer had access to budget products such as CLA and Volkswagen. (They were no longer available to the South African market, due to strategic decisions taken at group level.) These accounted for approximately 300 sales in 2018," explains Gunduz.

He believes that the single biggest success in 2019 was an 88-percent penetration rate of sales with R&M contracts. "The only customers who do not avail themselves of our R&M contracts are those who run utilisations where R&M-type contracts do not make sense, or those few customers who are what we term 'self-servicing operators'. These companies have invested extensively in their own workshop facilities and personnel, due to the demands of logistics contracts," says Gunduz.



With the MAN R&M contract, customers get basic MAN Telematics included free of charge. "This means that they get satellite tracking with stolen vehicle recovery, MAN ServiceCare proactive pre-service advisory calls, basic fleet management reports for vehicle and driver performance, as well as the traditional technical vehicle servicing coverage – all as part of the deal," explains Gunduz.

Central to MAN's various parts and service sales and marketing efforts are two young professionals – Anton Fuchs and Pieter Stander. "We are ecstatic that very large private capital dealers, who also have investments in other brands, have told us that no other automotive

brand has offered an equivalent range and level of dealer support for after-sales services," comments Fuchs.

"Having spent a long time in the local industry in various roles thus far, I am confident that our suite of dealer support services and activities are undoubtedly the benchmark in the South African commercial vehicle industry," elaborates Stander.

Looking forward into 2020, the MAN after-sales leadership team is keen to have even greater staff training delivery compared to 2019 (which showed record levels of training), hands-on support to fulfil the required dealer standards and the continued roll-out of the authorised MAN panel shops, which started in 2019.

"Clearly, Team MAN is showing extraordinary after-sales support for our customers – combining services that optimise the performance of truck, driver, support and management information – all with the objective of uptime and reduced operating costs. This is a welcome work ethic and set of initiatives at a time when we definitely need all hands on deck," concludes Gunduz. **F**



FACE TO FACE WITH VW'S ROBERTO CORTES

EACH MONTH, CHARLEEN CLARKE GOES FACE TO FACE WITH ONE OF THE CAPTAINS OF THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY. THIS MONTH, SHE CHATS TO ROBERTO CORTES, CEO OF VOLKSWAGEN CAMINHÕES E ÔNIBUS

A

fter a long recession, the Brazilian market started to recover in 2017. Brazilian vehicle manufacturers went on to record robust growth in bus and truck sales in 2018. And you've experienced more of the same in 2019. In the first 11 months of 2019, the

truck market grew by 18 percent while the bus market grew by 13.7 percent. How has Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus fared? I see Mercedes-Benz has pipped you to the market share post. This cannot be a situation that you enjoy?

We have maintained our market share of 27 or 28 percent. We give priority to financial results; this is far more important to us than market share – we focus first on profitability and customer satisfaction.

For sure, nobody likes to lose ground or market share – and the same applies to our company, but losing one or two points of market share is not the end of the world. We need to operate profitably. It's also important to bear in mind that we have to fund our investments; we are completely self-funding.

Speaking of investments, the big news (and a major investment) is your continent's first electric city delivery truck, the e-Delivery, which will roll off the assembly line in 2020. You must be very proud of this development?

Yes, we are. It is the first 100-percent electric light truck in Latin America with zero CO₂ emissions. Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus' global development centre, headquartered in Brazil, investigated and applied the best solutions available in the world and locally to satisfy our customers' needs for low emission vehicles that can run in emerging countries. The e-trucks and the e-Consortium to produce them form part of a R\$1.5 billion (R5,27 billion) investment.

I believe that Ambev Brewery – owner of brands such as Skol, Brahma, Antarctica and Guaraná – has already placed an order for these trucks. Is there interest from other companies, too?

Ambev will acquire 1 600 of these trucks by 2023. This is the world's largest order for e-trucks. Around 50 other customers have already registered their interest in the electric variant of the city delivery truck.

I'm assuming that you're trying to make these e-trucks comparative with the price of a diesel truck when it comes to the total cost of ownership (TCO), correct?

Yes. Right now, the e-trucks are fairly expensive. However, initial price is one thing. We know that TCO is important and we believe that they can compare favourably to diesel trucks. Energy costs drop by 70 percent with the electric trucks and maintenance costs drop by 50 percent. We are

also considering a rental scheme for the e-trucks – so the customer won't have to worry about the initial purchase price.

We visited your factory in Resende some years ago and we were impressed at the way that it works. We have yet to see another factory like it – where suppliers share the responsibility for assembling the vehicles with your company. You refer to an e-Consortium for production of the e-trucks. Will it work in a similar way?

Yes. The e-Consortium will operate in the same fashion. The advantages of our production concept include lower fixed costs and ensure profitability even at comparatively low utilisation rates. Production can be adapted more flexibly in response to differing market developments that are common in Brazil. It's the ideal factory concept for emerging markets because the equity ratio is lower, so target returns can be achieved more quickly than in conventional factories.

The e-Consortium will cover all aspects of electric vehicle manufacture and operations, from developing components locally to setting up the infrastructure needed to produce them, covering the entire useful life cycle of the vehicles, including disposal of the batteries at the end of their lives.

The e-Consortium partners and suppliers include Siemens, which provides the charging infrastructure and

equipment, and supplies electrical energy to clients; CATL and Moura are responsible for distribution, management and maintenance of the battery packs; and Bosch, WEG and Semcon are responsible for developing and supplying components.

We were the first company to demonstrate and test an electric-powered truck in Brazil under real operating conditions. And now, with the worldwide announcement of the e-Consortium business model, we are joining forces with companies that are leading the way in developing electric mobility.

Could you sell these electric trucks in South Africa?

South Africa is a priority market for us. We are producing the Constellation in Pinetown together with our MAN colleagues. Our objective is to offer new buses and trucks to the South African market. For now, we don't have right-hand drive e-Delivery models. We are, however, analysing the market.

You're achieving only single-digit monthly sales for the Constellation in South Africa. This must be a very disappointing situation for you?

Our main target is to provide the right truck for each market in which we compete. That's why we are a leader in Brazil and in most other markets in which we compete.

We are working hard to understand and meet the needs of South African transport operators. For sure we are not happy with the current volumes in South Africa. If we are one of the biggest volume producers in 30 markets, why don't we have the same situation in South Africa? We are working hard to change this situation.

Until recently, we were depending a lot on Brazil. With the crisis, we realised that we could not rely on our home market. We are putting a lot of money into the development of new products for markets other than Brazil. Export markets – including South Africa – are very important to us.

Finally, what has Traton meant to Volkswagen Caminhões e Ônibus?

We are living in a world that requires a lot more transformation than in the past. We have to think about electrification, autonomous driving, connectivity and digitisation – to name but a few things.

Operating alone, we would be way behind when it comes to those technologies. By being part of Traton, we have access to all these new technologies overnight. There are lots of synergies with MAN and Scania that can be explored. Without these synergies, we would risk our future – because we would come with new technologies, but only much later. **F**



We are putting a lot of money into the development of new products for markets other than Brazil.



LOGGING INTO THE FUTURE

THE TIME OF AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES IS HIGH WITH NEWSFEEDS ON THESE SELF-DRIVING MACHINES INCREASING EACH YEAR. WE DISCOVER THAT THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY IS ALSO JUMPING ON THIS BANDWAGON

H

istory was made last year when the first cab-less electric truck – Einride's autonomous truck, called the T-pod – drove on a public road, as was reported by Charleen Clarke, editorial director of

FOCUS, in Issue 7, 2019.

"The ground-breaking event took place at DB Schenker's facility in Jönköping, Sweden," she wrote. "The T-pod will be used to transport goods between a warehouse and terminal at the facility."

This came about after the Swedish Transport Agency issued the companies with a permit allowing the T-pod to drive on a public road (within an industrial area) between a warehouse and a terminal. The permit is valid until December 31, 2020.

The 26-t truck has a top speed of 85 km/h and a 200-km range. It is powered by a 200 kWh battery. "While it operates without a driver, it can be supervised and remotely operated by a human being. That person can be hundreds of kilometres away," Clarke pointed out.

Einride's plans include more than the road-freight industry. It has developed a concept vehicle that incorporates some off-road capabilities and is designed to navigate forest roads while transporting timber.

Robert Falck, CEO of Einride, points out: "Einride is constantly pushing the boundaries of autonomous and all-

electric vehicles in our ambition to lead the transition to a sustainable transportation system. With the Einride timber pod, we've created a vehicle that can withstand the rigours of a demanding environment."

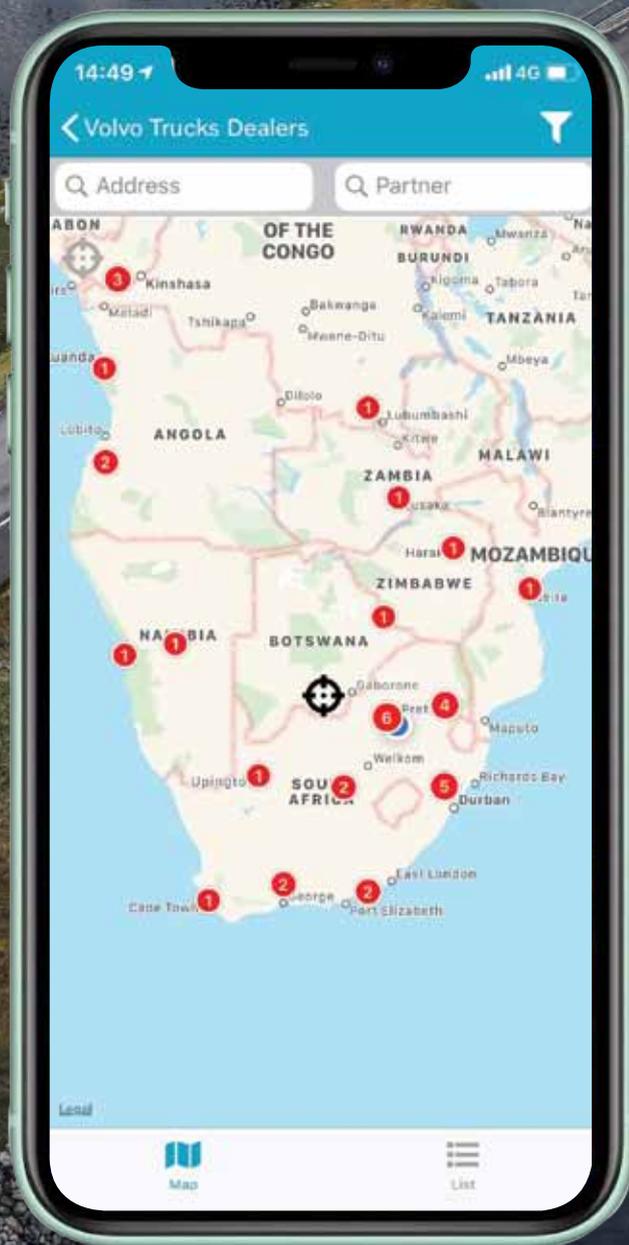
The timber pod, like its road-freight counterpart, has no driver's cab – making it smaller and lighter. This, in turn, provides an increased loading capacity, lower production and operating costs and optimised energy consumption, allowing the Einride timber pod to run solely on its batteries – even in difficult environments.

Falck adds: "The driver's cab is what makes trucks expensive to produce, and having a driver in the cabin is what makes them expensive to operate. Remove the cabin and replace the driver with an operator, who can remotely monitor and control several vehicles at once, and costs can be reduced significantly. In addition, operating a vehicle from a distance allows for a much better working environment, as has already been demonstrated in industries such as mining."

Einride hopes to introduce the timber pod to public roads during this year, as several major global companies have expressed interest in it.

Einride isn't the only company taking the autonomous route, as Svenska Cellulosa AB (SCA) – a Swedish timber, pulp and paper manufacturer – is participating in a comprehensive project to develop autonomous forestry machines.

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FORESTRY

Dubbed the Auto2 project, the Swedish forestry industry (including parties from universities, IT companies, forestry machinery manufacturers and forest management companies) wants to develop autonomous forwarders – the machines that carry the harvested timber to the forest road.

Running from December 2018 until the end of this year, Auto2 began by focusing on the machines, themselves,

forestry industry leads the world in developing equipment for harvesters and forwarders, so I really believe in this.”

He highlights that SCA is participating as a financier and in the reference group, where it contributes knowledge and offers test environments in its forests. The industry, along with Vinnova (Sweden’s innovation agency), has financed Auto2 with SEK 20 million (more than R33 million).



ABOVE: Einride’s timber pod has no driver’s cab, which provides increased loading capacity, lower production and operating costs as well as optimised energy consumption.

giving them the capability to plan their driving, move through the terrain and ensure that there is a safety zone around the machine to prevent injuries.

“The long-term vision is entirely self-driving machines,” explains Magnus Bergman, head of technology and operational development at SCA. “The area of autonomous vehicles is exciting, but also a tough development area, because the forest environment is very complex.”

He adds that the question of safety is of major concern, as harvesting areas aren’t enclosed. “What happens, for example, when a person or an animal enters the work area? Such issues and many more need to be resolved,” Bergman continues. “However, the Swedish

The Auto2 project’s ultimate goal is to have cab-less vehicles. “Without a cab the machines will be lighter and more efficient because they’ll have more room for timber,” Bergman emphasises.

“Moreover, the machine operators will be working in a much better environment, where the risk of accidents such as trips and falls is drastically reduced,” reduced. It may also be easier to recruit new operators when they know they can work with their colleagues from an office, instead of working alone out in the forest.”

Who knows, adverts for commercial vehicle operators might soon read “must be proficient with a joystick and a good listener”. **F**



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SCANIA FOR THE LONG HAUL

SCANIA IS A RENOWNED SUPPLIER OF LONG-HAUL TRUCKS. LITTLE SURPRISE THEN, THAT WHEN MATUMI FRESH LOGISTICS – A SUPPLIER OF FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES TO CUSTOMERS THROUGHOUT SOUTH AFRICA – WANTED FUEL-EFFICIENT, REFRIGERATED LONG-HAUL TRUCKS, IT WENT THE SCANIA ROUTE

Located in the verdant province of Mpumalanga, Matumi Fresh Logistics is dependent on an efficient cold chain to deliver to its 90-plus locations. The company has a mixed fleet of 23 vehicles, ranging from small delivery vans to bigger long-haul trucks.

MD Nick Wood tells **FOCUS** that after having been in business for 25 years, he took over the fruit and vegetable company from his father and mother (Anton and Marianne Wood). He soon realised that it was necessary for the company to have its own transport business. "With the responsibility of delivering fresh produce, we couldn't rely on other transport companies, as all the transport is refrigerated," he explains.

The six-unit, long-haul fleet comprises Scania trucks, which were selected for their reliability, fuel efficiency and driver comfort.

WHY SCANIA?

"We needed vehicles we can trust," Wood emphasises. Scania's reputation and standing made the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) a natural choice when it came to purchasing trucks specifically for the long-haul transportation of fresh produce.

Wood elaborates: "We had a choice from three top brands, but Scania's excellent brand identity — and the fact that it has been around for about 129 years — were the criteria for my first Scania purchase.

Long-haul driver comfort is top-of-mind for Matumi Fresh Logistics, and Wood notes that the low road noise, which reduces driver fatigue, the navigational improvements and the spaciousness of the G460 6x4 cab, are among driver benefits that influenced his purchase choice.

He adds that, over the years, by reducing fuel consumption,

the Scania trucks have brought the company's operational costs down significantly.

He explains that the older version (PGR) averaged 2.47 km/l, whereas the newer models are doing 2.79 km/l, making them 11 percent more efficient. "This may not seem a big amount, but over a year the saving is significant," Wood stresses.

Scania was the first manufacturer to offer a three-year repair and maintenance (R&M) package as standard on all new long-haul and distribution trucks. Wood says that through using Scania's R&M package, service intervals have been extended from the recommended 40 000 km to around 52 000 km.

He adds: "The extra 12 000 km between services has enhanced productivity by keeping the trucks on the road for longer periods. The trucks are constantly managing things such as oil levels and filter condition. As our industry is seasonal, this has enabled us to budget more accurately. There are no surprise bills!"

He is enthusiastic about the performance of the Swedish OEM's vehicles. He says: "Since we purchased the first Scania truck in 2017, we have had 100-percent uptime and zero breakdowns."

He says that servicing the trucks "is a real non-event", as they provide alerts and indicate when a service is required. There is the added benefit of being able to book a service at a Scania Service Centre in any of the major cities along the company's transport route.

Wood stresses that buying the Scania trucks has been more than a mere purchase. "The relationship that Scania develops with customers goes beyond the purchase. It's the entire package it offers, from in-house finance to servicing, that makes it such a phenomenal company. Scania takes all the stress out of owning a fleet," he concludes enthusiastically. **F**



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WEBFLEET SOLUTIONS: A STEP ABOVE THE REST



ONE COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING THAT VEHICLE TRACKING SYSTEMS ON OFFER BY TELEMATICS COMPANIES ARE ALL THE SAME. TELEMATICS – A METHOD OF MONITORING A VEHICLE BY USING GPS AND ONBOARD DIAGNOSTICS TO RECORD MOVEMENTS ON A COMPUTERISED MAP – IS A TRUSTED WAY TO SUPPLY RELEVANT DATA TO THE END USER. ALL AVAILABLE SYSTEMS IN THE MARKET PROFESS TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT. BUT WHICH VEHICLE TRACKING SYSTEM CAN PROVIDE DATA TO ITS CUSTOMERS IN A USER-FRIENDLY WAY? ENTER WEBFLEET SOLUTIONS ...

“ I

n the interests of keeping it simple, Webfleet Solutions provides data in a user-friendly way, via a dashboard that provides the customer only with the information they really want,” explains Justin Manson, sales director for South Africa. “We realise

that every business needs to measure different criteria. For example, we have several customers who require tracking cross-border, and for them, we charge a fixed monthly roaming fee, unlike some who are charging exorbitant amounts for this service.

“We offer real-time tracking so that customers can stay informed on the location of their vehicles at all times, whilst also providing them with access to real-time traffic and navigation. What is more, our PRO devices enable communication with the drivers while they are on the road and can even send new orders to update their route,” he adds.

WEBFLEET – FLEET OPTIMISATION SYSTEM ASSISTS IN PLANNING

Order Optimisation is a new feature on WEBFLEET that allows the user to optimise their job schedule in just one mouse-click. According to Manson, compared to other optimisation solutions in the market, this particular feature offers basic functionality, providing an easy step up to the more advanced solutions as delivered by their .Connect partners that specialise in workflow and order optimisation. The advantages? Planning and scheduling become easier and faster, accurate ETAs are provided to customers, drivers are kept on optimal routes, and mileage, admin and fuel costs are reduced, thereby freeing up capacity to take on more jobs.

Connecting to the WEBFLEET solution is easy with a WEBFLEET PRO Driver Terminal. This one system supports

seamless communication with the team in the field, helping to streamline workflow, thereby keeping customers happy.

UNIQUE TELEMATICS SOLUTION FOR GREENER DRIVING

Webfleet Solutions allows you to have a simple track and trace solution when a Link device is installed, which allows customers to track and trace your vehicle and always have visibility over your vehicles. For a more complex solution, an Eco device can be added to measure fuel consumption as can PRO devices to communicate with drivers, in-vehicle training, live traffic routing and orders being pushed to the device.

PROFESSIONAL NAVIGATION AND TRAFFIC AVOIDANCE SYSTEM BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY

“Being stuck in traffic affects worker productivity and impacts on your service and planning,” cautions Manson. “Webfleet Solutions has years of experience and provides a complex network of live traffic data and advanced algorithms, all working to achieve efficient fleet management.

“Drivers can rely on TomTom Traffic and be alerted to traffic jams and traffic congestion thanks to TomTom’s trillions of data points collected from hundreds of millions of connected devices, which are used with live traffic views to accurately predict and help avoid traffic.”

The company’s navigation technology is further equipped with a database of real driving times to calculate the fastest route, locate speed cameras and safely arrive at driver terminals, thereby vastly contributing towards road safety. **F**



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TELEMATICS SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY OPERATOR

WITH ALL THE BENEFITS IT OFFERS, ON-BOARD TELEMATICS HAS BECOME A MUST-HAVE FOR TRANSPORT OPERATORS. MARISKA MORRIS INVESTIGATES TELEMATICS SOLUTIONS AND SOME OF THE LATEST PRODUCTS

Technological advancements in the transport industry have enabled operators to access more information about their vehicles, routes and behaviour of their drivers than ever before. With this knowledge, it is possible for fleets to run more efficiently, for downtime to be limited and for transporters to ensure that cargo arrives safely.

As Andiswa Nyembe, public relations and communications specialist at Netstar, explains: "We are living in an age where data is king and access to 'anytime, anywhere' information is an expectation from both consumers and businesses. Telematics is the vehicle used to optimise big data for more effective fleet management.

"Through telematics, fleet owners can, for example, monitor driver behaviour, optimise fuel spend, improve route planning and set up predictive maintenance alerts."

Many telematics solutions also offer important safety features – an essential component when considering the tremendous loss of income due to hijackings.

Henry Smith, fleet sales director for MiX Telematics Africa, points out: "Fleet vehicles are easy targets for truck hijacking syndicates, due to their valuable cargo. As a result, truck hijackings currently cost the South African economy an estimated R3 billion a year, according to the South African Insurance Crime Bureau."

Telematics solutions like the MiX Fleet Manager online

platform can help combat this risk with real-time and historical tracking and a wireless back-up recovery device, which is vital in combatting vehicle theft and hijackings. Other solutions from the telematics company include 24/7 monitoring of triggered driving events (such as speeding or harsh braking) and alarm notifications, such as power-down alerts and panic buttons, in order to increase safety for both drivers and valuable cargo.

These benefits are available to fleets and businesses of all sizes, as Justin Manson, sales director for South Africa for Webfleet Solutions, a division of Bridgestone, points out: "Telematics solutions can benefit any business from small to large enterprises. These solutions enable transport operators to manage their fleets from start to finish.

"Webfleet Solutions gives truck owners the ability to always know the location of their vehicles, to communicate with drivers and to provide in-vehicle training – all of which enable the workforce to be more efficient and to better manage vehicle costs."

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Every business will have its own unique challenges. Fortunately, there are many options from which to choose.

"Each business has different needs. A telematics system therefore needs to be flexible," Manson explains. "Whether a client is looking to start with a track-and-trace



solution, or have live traffic, in-vehicle driver training and route optimisation, a telematics solution needs to be adaptable."

Telematics service providers such as Webfleet Solutions can provide a flexible system that allows customers to add devices or services while providing the most current software solutions. While a customised solution is the ideal approach for every business, some challenges are universal.

Nyembe explains: "Common problems faced by commercial fleet owners include reducing fleet costs, fuel optimisation, ensuring fleet (including cargo) and driver safety, streamlining administrative processes, avoiding unplanned downtime, adhering to delivery times and compliance requirements.

"The telematics solution implemented by transport owners should address these issues and be sufficiently scalable to meet any possible changes to business needs with minimal interruptions to the everyday running of the business."

Raymond Schulz, executive: commercial and marketing strategy, explains that although the software is important, the platform should also be easy to use. "The chosen tracking hardware system needs to provide enough inputs and measure accurate data, while also reflecting the data in an easily accessible platform.

"It must be in a readable format that improves the fleet controller's assessment of the trends in the fleet. Besides the core product offering, transport operators must also evaluate the options and countrywide infrastructure required to support it. The continued availability of the software that supports the hardware is not negotiable," he says.

PRODUCTS IN THE MARKET

Transport operators have many options when it comes to telematics solutions. For example, Netstar offers its customers global original equipment manufacturer-approved wireless add-on accessories to help improve quality adherence for fleet vehicles. These include temperature control and sensors.

The telematics services on offer include signal-jammer detection, live tracking, route management, impact detection, driver-behaviour monitoring and rating, zone management, service scheduling, maintenance and fuel cost management.

Netstar also provides camera solutions. Nyembe elaborates: "Cameras facing the fuel socket can be installed to vehicles to discourage fuel theft. The system can be set up so that any violations in this regard trigger alerts, for example."

MiX Telematics offers its MiX Fleet Manager Premium

solution with sophisticated on-board technology to gather vehicle and driver data, which is accessible online or through a mobile app. It is compatible with a range of services and comes with optional add-ons and accessories, including video recording systems, in-cab navigation and messaging devices, among others.

There is also the MiX Track and React 24-hour control room, where professional agents manage pre-determined driving criteria notifications immediately by contacting the driver when an event is triggered, thereby increasing safety and driver compliance. Smith notes: "Incidents like hijackings and vehicle theft can be acted on immediately, thus limiting losses."

Other services from MiX Telematics include driver and road-facing cameras, footage analysis, driver coaching tools and trend reporting. Webfleet Solutions and Ctrack also provides a wide range of telematic solutions to speak to the different challenges facing transport operators.

SOLUTIONS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

However, it doesn't stop there. Many of the telematics companies will be upgrading their services, expanding their ranges and implementing new services during the year, although not many details are available yet.

"With the backing of Bridgestone, there will be even

more new products and features coming out soon. However, we cannot disclose the details of these at this time," Manson says.

Netstar is similarly vague. Nyembe notes: "The Fourth Industrial Revolution opens a new world of connectedness and is set to unlock new business opportunities. Netstar will have a dedicated focus on bringing more value to our clients through these opportunities."

MiX Telematics in turn has launched a live-streaming service for its MiX Vision camera solution that enables fleet managers to view footage from up to eight cameras simultaneously. Smith notes: "This heightens the control that fleet managers have over their fleet by giving them immediate, live access to a view of their drivers and vehicles.

"It allows fleet owners to check if the driver is at risk and provide an understanding as to what possible traffic or road hazards the driver may be facing. It also gives the viewer access to monitor sensitive loading or unloading of cargo, as well as witness possible damages that may occur during the process."

One thing on which all the telematics companies agree is that the industry is growing at a tremendous rate with some exciting new technology – including artificial intelligence and 5G-enabled devices. **F**

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IN CONVERSATION WITH ANDREY KARGINOV

RUSSIAN RALLY RAID DRIVER ANDREY KARGINOV TOOK TOP HONOURS IN THE 2020 DAKAR RALLY IN THE TRUCK CATEGORY FOR KAMAZ. GIANENRICO GRIFFINI MEETS THE MAN BEHIND THE CHEQUERED FLAG

Two Kamaz crews finished on the podium in Qiddiya and another Kamaz truck was placed in fourth position in the final ranking. Did you expect this result before the rally began – especially given the uncertainties of the first Dakar in the Arabian Peninsula?

Every time we go to a competition, especially the Dakar (the most challenging race of the year), we go with certain objectives. So, too, do the rest of the competitors. Everyone goes with their ambitions and wants to show the best possible result.

As for our team, our task was to win the race. We took first, second and fourth places, which was an excellent result. The race was difficult. Both the pace set by our rivals, and sometimes our own fast pace, raised concerns as to whether the vehicles and crews would cope, but we proved once again that we are a strong team and can win.

How do you compare the Dakar in South America with the Dakar in Saudi Arabia? Was this year's rally more or less difficult than last year's race? If so why?

There were common features, and of course differences. First, it was summer during the Dakar in South America, and winter in Saudi Arabia. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia was slightly better because there was no exhausting heat, but the temperature was cold at night; it reached almost zero

degrees. The mechanics had to wear very warm clothes in order not to freeze while doing their jobs.

The second difference was that during the event in Saudi Arabia there were no high altitudes. This made it easier for the participants, the vehicles and the engines.

Furthermore, the travelling time was shorter, and it was easier to adapt to the racing conditions. Having said this, the tracks on the Dakar 2020 were very diverse. There were high-speed sections, where we could drive at maximum speed, sandy tracks and dunes of various complexities. There were rocky sections and roads with huge boulders, as well as "killer" winding riverbeds. We were presented with all the types of terrain that we love in rally raids.

Can you explain the main reasons for your performance this year? Was it, as in the past, mainly due to the tests you carried out before the rally, the ability of your Kamaz 43509 rally truck, the teamwork, the tactics and the strategies of your team manager Vladimir Chagin, or perhaps the reliable Dongfeng Cummins 13-litre engine?

There wasn't only one reason. The team had masses of experience and we reviewed the team tactics every day. We also trained extensively during the year. The competitions in which we participated during the year also contributed to our result at the Dakar. Both the truck and the engines were reliable. When all these factors were combined, we produced a good result.

Did you use an automatic gearbox this year? If so, why, and did you like it?

Yes, from this year, all four sports crews drove with an automatic gearbox. Last year, only two drivers went with an automatic gearbox. The other two, including me, used a manual transmission.

I drove with the automatic gearbox for the first time on the Silk Way Rally. Its main advantage is in the dunes, in heavy sand, where it is necessary to change gears constantly. With a manual gearbox, this is more difficult and you probably lose more time. For example, if you skid, then there are definite advantages to the automatic gearbox.

Can you tell us, in some detail, the story of your Dakar this year? What were the main turning points of this year's rally?

The organisers of the Dakar aim to make it an unforgettable adventure. Every year they try to surprise contestants. This year they certainly succeeded. There was a huge variety of tracks, which were also very complex. There were lots of

sharp stones on the route, and I was constantly mindful of the need to avoid punctures.

The final 100 km was populated by huge boulders that I had to avoid while still going fast. It was extremely risky – because the truck could have been severely damaged. At the finish line, many of the frontrunners in the car category said that it was the most difficult 100 km in the history of the Dakar.

Who was the most challenging competitor this year? Viazovich?

I respect all the competitors. Everyone was working towards a good result and a victory. Although, having said that, the MAZ (with Sjarhei Viazovich), Tatra, Hino and Renault teams were all strong – as were Iveco's Gerard De Rooy and

BELOW LEFT: Running a hugely successful team at the Dakar is no mean feat, but Vladimir Chagin has been doing just that for years.

BELOW RIGHT: Extremely low temperatures meant that the technicians had to dress very warmly at night.



I love dunes. You do not have to drive fast in the dunes; you need to overcome them without getting stuck.





FAR LEFT: A special message to the International Truck of the Year jury members from Karginov.

LEFT: The first, second and third placed teams on the podium at the end of the arduous event.

Federico Villagra. From time to time, they all achieved good results. It could be said that our performance was more consistent and, in the aggregate of all the days, we showed the best time.

How would you describe your driving style? Are you aggressive, cool or perhaps a tactician?

I use all three styles. Sometimes I need to go fast, and this involves aggressive driving, but I'm mindful of exposing myself and my truck to as little risk as possible. This is not always achievable. I also bear in mind the team tactics. All this combines to achieve a good result.

Where do you feel at your best as a pilot – on rocky stretches, soft desert sand, dunes, or on the narrow and winding routes?

Our team says: "The worse the track, the better it is." The tracks to which they are referring are the "killer" winding stony riverbeds – and those are the conditions that I like best.

It's not very enjoyable to race over a mountainous special stage where you cannot cut corners because you need to drive in a fixed track. On mountain stages, there's usually a hill on the one side and a drop-off on the other, so if you cut the corners, you die.

You obviously need to be especially cool-headed in those conditions. I love dunes. You do not have to drive fast in the dunes; you need to overcome them without getting stuck.

Can you outline the major steps in your career as a pilot of rally trucks? Where and when did you start driving a rally truck? I suppose in Chelny?

Yes, my career began in Naberezhnye Chelny with karting. Although karts are essentially small cars, they have much in common with a truck – a sense of steering, reaction and a desire to win, for instance.

Karting teaches a motor sportsman a great deal. And sitting behind the wheel of a truck, you just make corrections and expand these skills. All my skills and achievements as a pilot are thanks to the team. The team has taught me everything.



Would you like to drive a bonneted truck, instead of a cab-over truck?

I drove a bonneted truck during one training session and I experienced its advantages, but, in order to learn how to manage it, you cannot simply drive one in a race or two; you need to drive it over a period of a year.

I am sure that our bonneted truck will become a worthy rival in the future. For now, however, we have developed our cab-over version to the point that it is extremely competitive and it performs well. It is currently the main focus for the team.

Finally, can you tell us anything about your future projects?

Our main project is our racing truck, its modernisation and its ongoing improvement. As a driver, I am primarily interested in improving its sporting qualities. I want to make it faster. Certainly, it needs testing.

We can do this at the Silk Way Rally. This event allows us to test both the truck and our driving skills. It takes place in three different countries and it offers a variety of tracks: dunes, sand, hard tracks and slippery off-road sections. Competition is stiff. If you succeed at the Silk Way Rally, you can go to Dakar with confidence. **F**

As regular readers of **FOCUS** know, this magazine has been appointed an associate member of the International Truck of the Year (IToY)! **FOCUS** is the sole South African magazine to have joined this prestigious body. One of the advantages of this association is access to exclusive articles, specially written for **FOCUS** by ITOY jury members. This is one such article.



GLOBAL FOCUS NEWS

GOLDEN MOMENT!

Recently, I travelled to the Spanish port city of Bilbao. The reason for my trip? The global debut of MAN's new truck generation – bedazzling in gold – and a seat at the highly sought-after VIP event celebrating its arrival.

The event was a Seriously Big Deal in the world of MAN and, indeed, in the entire trucking fraternity. I say this because it was the company's first product launch in a whopping two decades. Actually, it wasn't just a product launch; it was the launch of an all-new range, because the new truck generation covers the TGL, TGM, TGS and TGX model series from 7,5 to 41 t.

Now I know what you're all wondering; was it worth the wait? Most certainly. Yes, the exterior is more of an evolution, and I'm not a big fan of this (I was hoping for a truck that looked completely new). However, the interior is a definite revolution – and that's probably more important to truckers anyway.

I'm testing the truck in Sweden (probably as you're reading this article) and will publish a comprehensive road test in a future issue of **FOCUS** – well in advance of the truck's launch in South Africa in March 2021. However, for now, here are the things I like most about the new truck.

Fantastic interior

I simply have to kick off with this aspect of the truck – because the interior rocks; to be frank, it's not unlike a luxury car. All the materials are decidedly high-end, and it looks and feels premium. Even the

steering wheel looks and feels good; it boasts what MAN calls "an ergonomically varying thickness".

Practically, this means that it really does feel good in your hand. It's almost infinitely adjustable, too; the steering wheel can be adjusted by 110 mm, and the driving position can be adjusted between 20 and 55°, bringing it to a similar position as in a car. To make getting into the truck easier when parked, it can also be completely folded down into a horizontal position.

The steering wheel is equipped with a variety of controls. On the left is cruise and distance control; on the right you control functions such as the radio, telephone and the MAN media system.

The control lever for the automated transmission is now located on the right of the steering column next to the engine brake lever (it used to be a pneumatic lever located in its own centre console next to the driver's seat).

As one of my colleagues commented at the launch: "At last, the orphaned switch block with the rotary switch for the transmission control, and the parking brake lever next to the driver's seat, are finally history." (I cannot help but concur.) Speaking of the parking brake, it's now electrically operated, and it's situated in the main dashboard just to the right of the steering wheel.

The most important feature of the interior (in my mind anyway) is the MAN SmartSelect infotainment system. It works using a central rotary control much as one you would find in many luxury cars. And the really cool thing is that it incorporates





a fold-out hand rest – so you can forget about shoulder pains. With MAN SmartSelect, you just turn and press the control. It's very easy to use; the menu is logically structured and it also happens to look good.

Interestingly, MAN has deliberately forgone the use of a touch screen for the media system. This is because, when using a touch screen, your gaze automatically follows your finger – and is thus directed away from the road.

“Furthermore, the screen has to be placed at a level where it can be reached by hand, which makes it more difficult to adjust one's gaze between close-range and distance viewing. On the whole, the use of a touch screen means that, to operate it, drivers have to shift their gaze from what is happening on the road for a relatively long time. This means a higher safety risk,” one of the engineers told me.

Practicality par excellence

There are lots of practical features of the new truck that will make the driver's life so much easier. Just one is the MAN EasyControl system – which means that the driver doesn't necessarily have to climb in and out of the truck.

Inside the driver's door, there are four control

panels that can be easily accessed from outside the vehicle. Depending on configuration, they come pre-programmed with key functions or can even be implemented according to individual needs. Shutting the sliding roof, switching on the spotlights or starting the engine for the tipping operation ... all of these functions can now also be activated from outside the truck. The driver can also switch on the hazards from the outside in a flash.

Another wonderfully practical feature is the lack of a centre console in the new truck generation – so the driver can walk straight through the cab. Then there are also the new drawers below the dashboard. An A4 clipboard fits in there easily. These are just some of the practical features that will make drivers grin from gear to gear.

Outstanding economy

It goes without saying (but here goes anyway): fuel economy is vitally important to transport operators. The new truck generation offers lower lifecycle costs, a higher load capacity and (cue the trumpets) fuel consumption that is up to eight percent lower. The fuel savings are courtesy of the Euro-6d engines, optimised drive axle, improved aerodynamics and GPS-assisted cruise control. What a deal!





Brilliant safety features

As expected from any new truck, there are safety features galore. Many of our readers will be familiar with these features, but I will explain them briefly. The newly developed turn assist helps to prevent serious accidents in urban traffic – four years before the legally prescribed introduction.

The lane-change assist warns the driver of vehicles in the next lane. Lane departure warning gives an acoustic warning if the vehicle leaves its lane. Lane-return assist kicks in if the vehicle leaves its lane (it is brought back into the lane by a corrective steering movement).

The emergency brake assist system warns the driver of an impending collision and automatically initiates a braking procedure in an emergency. MAN AttentionGuard monitors the driver's fitness for driving, while adaptive cruise control automatically regulates the speed and the distance to traffic ahead. There's also a driver's airbag and high-beam assist, which automatically dips the high beam in good time and prevents the drivers of oncoming vehicles from being blinded.

Incredible electric and electronic (EE) architecture

This isn't something that's immediately apparent, but it's really cool. Apparently, vehicles with decentralised EE architectures have been usual until now. Many functions – from cruise control to turn assist – have their own hardware.

"It's like having a laptop that runs only Microsoft Word. You would need to buy a new laptop if you want to use Excel. A paradox, but not so unusual in the automotive industry," says Stefan Teuchert, head of EE systems at MAN. Communication between the installed hardware is also sometimes difficult and retrofitting has its limits – problems Teuchert and his team wanted to solve.

And so they did! The result is a completely new

EE architecture. Its core is a central computer inside the vehicle, a kind of brain through which all information is fed and which controls all required processes.

The great thing about it: new functions can be loaded via internet interfaces, similar to using a smartphone, without any need to take the vehicle to a workshop. These could include functions and apps that support fuel-efficient driving or help meet regulatory requirements.

"It is also straightforward to integrate third-party software. This enables even more functionality and added value for the user. This openness and flexibility make the new MAN truck a future-proof and sustainable vehicle. Its real strength will be felt in the coming years, especially when it virtually updates itself with new functions quickly and easily," Teuchert explains.

It's what drivers and customers want

Finally, one of the features that I like most about the new truck range is the fact that it's exactly what drivers and operators want. I know you're wondering how on earth I can make such a sweeping statement. I can, because MAN did a massive amount of market research before designing the new series.

For instance, the MAN developers presented different prototypes to over 700 drivers – and then asked them for their opinions. The company also invited 300 national and international customers from a total of 16 countries to Munich, in order to define the most important requirements for a new vehicle with them. The developers compared this diverse input with the feedback from the driver interviews ... and then they set about creating the new MAN truck generation.

So yes, this is a truck generation that the customers and drivers both want and need. Sounds like a recipe for success methinks... **F**

VOLVO TRUCKS LAUNCHES FOUR NEW HEAVY-DUTY TRUCKS

Volvo Trucks has introduced four new heavy-duty trucks, which will come to South Africa in the fourth quarter of this year.

The trucks have a strong focus on the driver environment, safety and productivity. "We are really proud of this big forward-looking investment. Our aim is to be our customers' best business partner by making them even more competitive and by helping them to attract the best drivers in an increasingly tough market," says Roger Alm, president of Volvo Trucks. The four heavy-duty trucks; Volvo FH, FH16, FM and FMX, represent about two thirds of Volvo Trucks' deliveries.

An expected growing demand for transport is putting pressure on the availability of skilled drivers worldwide. In Europe, for example, estimates show that around 20 percent of all driver jobs are vacant. To help customers recruit and retain the best drivers, Volvo Trucks has focused strongly on developing the new trucks to make them safer, more efficient and more attractive working tools for qualified drivers.

"Drivers who handle their truck safely and efficiently are an invaluable asset to any transport company. Responsible driving behaviour can help reduce CO₂ emissions and fuel costs, as well as help reduce the risk of accidents, injury and unplanned downtime. Our new trucks will help drivers work even more safely and productively and give our customers stronger arguments when competing to attract the best drivers," continues Alm.

The various truck models in Volvo Trucks' range are available with many different cab models and can be optimised for a wide range of applications. In long-haul trucks the cab is often the driver's second home. In regional transport, trucks often serve as a mobile office, while in construction the trucks are robust, practical work tools.

Therefore, visibility, comfort, ergonomics, noise level, manoeuvrability and safety were key focal points when developing all the new truck models. The truck exterior has also been upgraded to reflect the new trucks' properties and create an attractive overall design.

NEW CAB, OFFERING MORE SPACE AND IMPROVED VISIBILITY

The new Volvo FM and Volvo FMX have a new cab, as well as many of the same instrument display



functions as their larger Volvo counterparts. Their interior volume has been increased by up to one cubic metre, providing better comfort and more working room. The visibility is now even better, due to larger windows, a lowered door line and new mirrors.

EFFICIENT ENGINES AND ALTERNATIVE DRIVELINES

In many markets, the Volvo FH and Volvo FM are available with the Euro-6 gas-powered LNG engine that offers fuel efficiency and performance on par with that of Volvo's equivalent diesel trucks, but with a far lower climate impact.

The gas engine can run on either biogas, which cuts CO₂ emissions by up to 100 percent, or natural gas which reduces CO₂ emissions by up to 20 percent when compared with Volvo's equivalent diesel trucks. This relates to emissions from the vehicle during usage, known as tank to wheel. **F**



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CHARLEEN CLARKE is editorial director of **FOCUS**. While she is based in Johannesburg, she spends a considerable amount of time overseas, attending international transport events – largely in her capacity as associate member of the International Truck of the Year Jury.

SHORT HAULS

FORD HELPS PROTECT THE AFRICAN PENGUIN

With help from Ford Motor Company South Africa, the endangered African penguin is being given a lifeline through the invaluable work done by the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (Sanccob).

For over 30 years, Ford has been actively involved in the conservation of wildlife and ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa, investing almost R40 million to support over 170 projects to date. The Ford Wildlife Foundation (FWF) continues this support by providing 4x4 Ranger Double Cabs to organisations such as Sanccob.

Sanccob is a marine conservation non-profit organisation established in 1968 to rescue, rehabilitate and release ill, injured, abandoned and oiled seabirds. "We're in a race against time here," says Hedwich Tulp, resource development manager at Sanccob, "so we're incredibly grateful to the FWF and its loan of our amazing Ford Ranger, which is instrumental in allowing us to carry out some of our most important work, often in remote locations with challenging terrain."

Lynda du Plessis, manager of the FWF, says, "We currently have 25 Ford Rangers on loan to partner organisations, and we'd like to thank Sanccob for its unwavering commitment to the care of our seabirds – particularly its tireless efforts to ensure the sustainability of the endangered African penguin, as well as three other endemic endangered seabirds, namely the Cape gannet, Cape cormorant and bank cormorant."

PLIGHT OF THE ENDANGERED AFRICAN PENGUIN

African penguin populations in the wild have declined by 95 percent over the last 200 years, with just 20 000 breeding pairs left. At the current rate of decline, African penguins in the wild could be extinct within the next 20 years.

"Since the establishment of our Chick Rearing Unit (CRU) in 2011, where we focus on the rescue of abandoned African penguin eggs and chicks, we have successfully hand-reared and released over 7 000 penguin chicks back into the wild," says Tulp.

"Now, with the FWF's help, our rehabilitation staff and our penguin and seabird rangers at crucial breeding colonies will be able to rescue, hand-rear and release at least 400 penguin chicks annually."



A NEW LIBRARY FOR LINDISA PRIMARY SCHOOL, THANKS TO HYUNDAI

At Lindisa Primary School in Evaton, Gauteng, learners can now enjoy their new library and resource centre, furnished with tables and chairs, computers, a big-screen whiteboard and around 4 500 new books, thanks to Hyundai Automotive South Africa.

Sponsorship of the library and resource centre amounted to R1.5 million, and forms part of Hyundai's ongoing social investment project. The services of two librarians will also be provided for a period of six months, after which one librarian will continue to help learners at the school.

Lawrence Ngcobo, principal of the school, took delivery of the new library and resource centre and thanked Hyundai Automotive SA and the Imperial and Motus Community Trust for their involvement in education and improving the opportunities of learners.

Hyundai, in collaboration with the Imperial and



Motus Community Trust, has already delivered excellent library and resource centres to eight schools, including Southview High School, Libra Primary School in Lenasia, Heerengracht Primary School in Eldorado Park, Motheo Foundation Primary School in Lawley, Freedom Primary School in Devland, Mid-Ennerdale Primary School and Phehello Primary School in Sebokeng.

Under its slogan, 'Realising the dreams and aspirations of humankind through creative thinking and rising to new challenges', the Hyundai Motor Company carries out authentic corporate social investment campaigns and programmes that reflect its mission statement and core values.

On the African continent, Hyundai also supports an educational programme on road safety and environmental protection in Morocco, and donates educational equipment to schools in impoverished areas in Nigeria.

HINO WASTE-WATER RECYCLING TRUCK – A FIRST FOR SA

The new hydraulically operated Hino waste-water recycling truck is a first for South Africa, and is ideal for cleaning sewer and stormwater lines.

Users no longer have to leave the working site to dump the load of waste water before refilling the tank and returning – this can now be done simultaneously. Apart from saving time and fuel, the truck eliminates the wastage of 168 000 litres of water, per machine, in every eight-hour working shift.



Hino Isando and Werner Pumps & Equipment built the truck using high-quality components on a robust Hino 700 cab and chassis. Available in various forms and sizes, the unit also has wet and dry suction capabilities.

While the high-pressure and vacuum pumps are imported from Switzerland, everything else – including the tank and cylinders – is built in Springs, Gauteng, by Werner Pumps.

The vehicle has been specially designed for rugged African conditions, with several components toughened for improved durability. The power take-off was done by Hino-approved Truck Equipment. On this particular vehicle, the chassis was lengthened by Ticaserve to accommodate the tank.

Due to its contact-free rotor design, the vacuum pump is extremely quiet, despite being equipped with 3 100 m³/hr suction power. The top-mounted boom is also unique in that it can rotate a full 360°, unlike others that only rotate 255°.

The unit has a continuous slewing capability with a six-inch suction line, while the single-cylinder pressure transformer pump jets 350 l/min at 205 bar. The vacuum pump is also available in various sizes.

The 12 500-litre tank, which can be tipped 40° upwards, is constructed from anti-corrosive 304-grade stainless steel, and a tank cleaning nozzle is provided for cleaning out excess debris.

The water recycler can be operated via wireless remote control. As electronic real-time location monitoring is provided, the vehicle can be viewed on mobile devices at all times. The unit's total number of operating hours is also recorded.

In order to fulfil its contractual obligations, Werner Pumps is currently providing the smaller Hino 500 series water recycling trucks to customers while the larger vehicle is being produced.

STATE OF THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MARKET, FEBRUARY 2020

Light Commercial Vehicles < 3 501 kg	Total: 11 625
Fiat Chrysler Automobiles South Africa	89
Ford Motor Company	1 923
GWM	156
Hyundai Automotive SA	319
Isuzu Motors South Africa	1 333
Iveco	0
Changan	23
JMC	25
Kia South Africa	143
Mahindra	420
Mazda South Africa	14
Mercedes-Benz SA	97
Mitsubishi	39
Nissan	2 109
Opel	15
Peugeot	1
Renault	3
Suzuki Auto	63
Toyota	4 500
Volkswagen SA	353
Medium Commercial Vehicles 3 501 – 8 500 kg	Total: 686
FAW	15
Fiat	0
Ford Motor Company	14
Hyundai Automotive SA	24
Isuzu Motors South Africa	100
Iveco	98
JMC	10
Mercedes-Benz SA	152
Peugeot Citroën South Africa	1
Powerstar	0
Tata	27
Toyota (Hino)	128
Toyota	64
VECV (Eicher)	1
Volkswagen SA	52
Heavy Commercial Vehicles 8 501 – 16 500 kg	Total: 352
FAW	67
Isuzu Motors South Africa	74
Iveco	0
MAN Automotive	2
Mercedes-Benz SA	43
Powerstar	25
Tata	50
Toyota (Hino)	57
VECV (Eicher)	2
Volvo Group Southern Africa (UD)	32
Extra-Heavy Commercial Vehicles > 16 500 kg	Total: 1 089
Babcock DAF	17
FAW	22
Isuzu Motors South Africa	7
Iveco	12
MAN Automotive	126
MAN (Volkswagen)	0
Mercedes-Benz SA	297
Powerstar	58
Scania	144
Tata	9
Toyota (Hino)	15
VECV (Eicher)	1
Volvo Group Southern Africa (UD)	146
Volvo Group Southern Africa	235
Buses > 8 500 kg	Total: 668
Isuzu Motors South Africa	5
Iveco	5
MAN	22
MAN (Volkswagen)	0
Mercedes-Benz SA	14
Scania	17
Tata	1
Volvo Group Southern Africa	4

Note: Mercedes-Benz SA reports only aggregated sales data. The company's commercial vehicle market split volumes are estimates based on historical trends and forecasting techniques. All figures are supplied by Naamsa.

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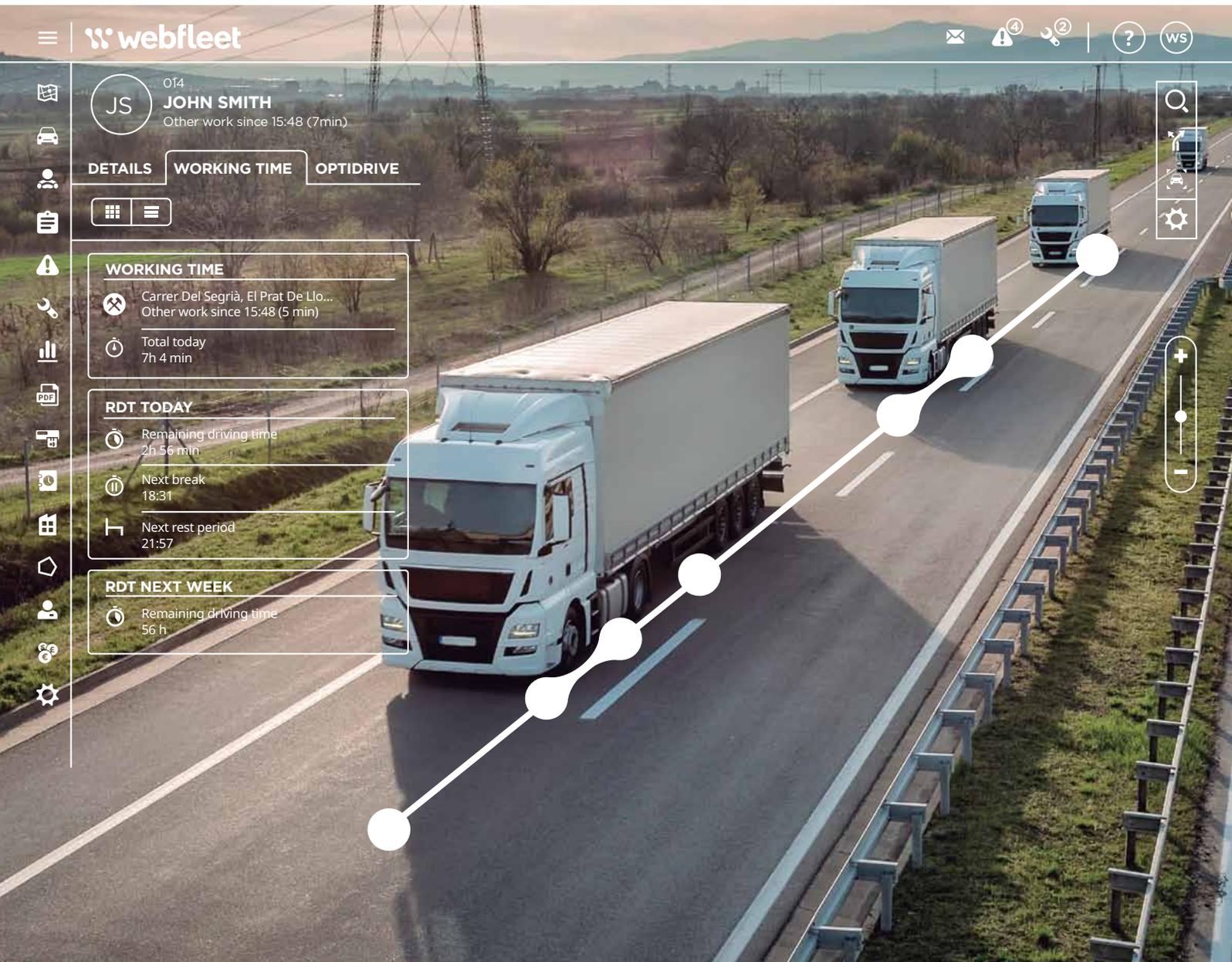
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