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# A QUESTION OF REPLACEMENT PARTS

**SOURCING ALTERNATIVE REPLACEMENT PARTS FOR TRUCKS IS JUST ONE PROCUREMENT EXAMPLE THAT CAN HAVE NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF A VEHICLE'S WHOLE-LIFE COST, WARNS AN ENGINEERING EXPERT**

**W**

hen replacing truck parts, it's important to use original items rather than alternatives that merely look similar to the real McCoy. As the old saying goes: identical twins share 100 percent of their genes – fraternal twins share only 50 percent. For replacement truck parts, the difference matters.

That's the warning from Roger Brereton, a United Kingdom-based expert at Pailton Engineering, who has a few theories relating to the long-term cost advantages of opting for original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts.

He says a critical aspect of a vehicle's whole-life cost relates to maintenance costs accumulated during its service life, and sourcing "kind of similar" replacement components for trucks is just one procurement example that can have negative implications.

"You cannot be sure that alternative products are made to the same standards as those supplied by the OEM, and so could result in costly, recurring repairs," he warns, explaining that OEM products are those sourced directly from the manufacturer of the vehicle's original parts and are identical to the items that need replacing, made with the same considerations and quality assurance.

"Contrastingly, alternative parts manufactured by a third-party company may be intended to serve a similar function to the parts being replaced, but they are not an exact match. It is, therefore, much harder to ensure the same levels of functionality and quality, bringing with it a higher risk of failure. In a worst-case scenario, one unfortunate accident could result in an irreversibly damaged reputation for the operator, all because an OEM part wasn't sourced."

According to Brereton, one reason for the disparity in performance is that the quality of raw materials used in manufacturing alternative parts varies greatly, compared with a premium OEM-quality part that is made from specified standard raw materials and tested for consistency.

"Choosing an OEM part may boost a customer's confidence in the safety and reliability of the part – but

confidence doesn't protect profit margins. The measurable reward comes from reduced comebacks and downtime. If vehicles are kept on the road, profits are maximised – yet commercial fleet managers are still falling for false economy by choosing cheap options.

"Generally speaking, alternative parts are usually much less expensive than OEM parts, which, at first glance, may seem like a budget-friendly option, but, as the saying goes, buying cheap means buying twice. Alternative parts lack the OEM's guarantee of quality, fit and function and may mean additional purchases in the short-term."

Brereton says that, ultimately, a vehicle could go through one or more alternative replacements in the span of an OEM part's life, taking trucks off the road for repair with recurring labour costs associated with each episode. "Suddenly," he says, "the aforementioned whole-life cost rapidly increases."

He adds that a contentious issue surrounding alternative parts is an often-misleading strapline that claims the component matches the quality of OEM equivalents. "There are no defined regulations on what is actually meant by suppliers who label products with this phrase," he says.

"It is often easier to explain what this strapline doesn't mean. A 'matched quality' part certainly doesn't mean the part is an OEM part, or is OEM approved. Most will not have been tested to the vehicle manufacturer's quality standards, but simply declared fit for purpose by the supplier."

As a parting shot, Brereton asks fleet managers and buyers to shop in a way that protects the industry in which they work. "It works both ways," he says. "Buying an OEM product enables access to the manufacturer's network of support, something which is certainly lacking with regard to alternative parts. Questions are answered by someone who knows the equipment and parts first-hand, rather than by someone with only passable knowledge about the part in question."

Food for thought, indeed!

**WYNTER MURDOCH**



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Haven't yet seen **FOCUS** on social media? Not to worry, here are some of our most popular posts from the last month.

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

Khanyiso Humele, energy analyst at GreenCape, notes at the #2019SAConf that hybrid vehicle sales are doing better than electric vehicle sales. "South Africans are not ready to go fully electric. They still want the convenience of petrol-powered vehicles," she explains.

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

We got an exclusive demonstration of the wheelchair lift fitted on the @IVCOZA Amway bus at the #2019SAConf. What do you think?

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

\$175 000 (about R2.4 million) literally fell out of an armored truck in the United States recently. Apparently it looked as though it was raining money! Read more: <https://bit.ly/2QaFY7f>

**Drivers stopped on an Atlanta Interstate to grab \$175,000 in cash that fell out of an armored truck. Police want it back**

👤 TheFav  
 Dick Mulcaire 🤔 mental state, I see they are learning very fast. Money 🤑 the sky

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

This news will break the hearts of ardent beer drinkers! Hundreds of cases of beer have tumbled out of a truck and onto the autobahn in southwestern Germany, destroying an estimated €12,000 (about R200,000) worth of beer. <http://bit.ly/2ZilyWsl>

**TRUCK SPLITS 10,000 BEER BOTTLES ONTO ROAD**  
 Driver loses more than 12,000 euros in cargo

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

Going up? We love the view of the #2019SAConf from the top deck of the @IVANTruckBusSA Lion City bus!

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Bob Dlouh, from the World Bank, shares the important role of public transport in sustainable urban development. He notes "We only remember the importance of public transport when it fails." #2019SAConf

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

**BREAKING NEWS!** At least 2,500 truck drivers in the United States have lost their jobs in 2019 as a transportation "bloodbath" unfolds. Rates have plummeted by 15%! It's a real horror story. Read and weep... <https://lnkd.in/g/2334J2P5>

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

Check out these SHOCKING images of burnt-out and looted trucks on the N2! The situation is getting sort of horrific. Pics courtesy @kate\_van\_der\_Camp Young Services. Read more here: <http://bit.ly/2xk3574>

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

This is what South African truck drivers want. Do you think that these wages are fair? <http://bit.ly/2Y1ePqj>

**BUSINESS24.CO.ZA**  
**This is how much money truck drivers are paid in South Africa**  
 The Department of Labour has published its minimum wages for truck drivers.

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

How great is the new @IVANTruckBusSA double decker bus with Euro 5 engine? Visit the #2019SAConf to see this beauty up close and personal!

Jay Lardizabal **Onion View it's a front and rear STEERING FUNCTION.**

**FOCUS on Transport and Logistics**

BUST! Two examiners who allegedly "overlooked" vehicle defects at a testing station in exchange for money have been arrested in Cape Town. <http://bit.ly/2GMD4N9>

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**Unroadworthy truck had passed its safety test just an hour earlier**

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# PARTNERING FOR PROFIT



**FROM BRAND SCEPTIC TO ARDENT SUPPORTER – THAT’S HOW TITUS NAIDOO EXPLAINS HIS PASSION FOR SCANIA, A NAMEPLATE THAT’S HELPED HIM TO BUILD HIS MEYERTON-BASED COMPANY, GLOBAL NET LOGISTICS, INTO A SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSPORT POWERHOUSE**

**W**hen Titus Naidoo was looking to buy a second-hand truck to replace an aging hauler he had in his fleet, he met a Scania used-truck executive who he describes as “quite a good salesman.” Though Titus was sceptical about the brand’s ability to meet his requirements, the salesman convinced him that the Scania 480 he had come to view was a good buy.

“He threw in a six-month warranty as part of the deal, and he added a host of accessories. I was impressed. Compared with other used-truck salesmen with whom I

had had dealings, this guy was straightforward and honest in his approach. He made our negotiations easy.”

Naidoo still has that truck. When he bought it, it had done about 100 000 km. Now it’s got nearly a million and a half kilometres on its odometer – and it’s still in daily use. “My intention is to refurbish it. I don’t want to part with this truck. It marked a successful turning point for me and my business – and it started a relationship with Scania that I value highly. It’s been a profitable partnership.”

It was in 2012 that Global Net Logistics acquired the vehicle – the first Scania in what has now become a fleet



of 14 – comprising G460s, R465s and R500s – with an additional two new R500s scheduled to join the line-up by the time you read this.

"Initially, I was pretty sceptical about the Scania brand," says Naidoo. "Now you won't convince me that there's anything better – and it's not only from a truck reliability perspective that I'm talking; finance, insurance, after-sales service, technical advice and resale values offered by the company all fall into the top-drawer category. Since my first encounter with the brand, I've been totally won over."

His trust in the Scania badge – and his faith in the abilities of the brand's personnel – is underlined by the fact that Naidoo once bought a used truck from Scania Cape Town on the strength of a telephone conversation and some pictures sent over the internet.

"Sales staff knew Global Net was in the market for a used model and, soon after that message had gone out, I received a call from Cape Town's used-truck division to say a vehicle in good condition that met my needs had just been traded in. I spoke at length with the salesman and he sent some pictures so that I could see what the truck looked like. On the strength of his recommendation, I bought the vehicle without actually assessing it in the metal.

"That's an illustration of the proactive stance all members of the company with whom I have had dealings tend to adopt – not only on the sales side, but in all departments. In my experience, all of Scania's people deliver according to their promises."

Naidoo now buys most of Global Net's vehicles new, using the company's specialist knowledge of risk and residual values in choosing finance and insurance options. "Just as the company presents tailor-made solutions in terms of the vehicles it sells, the maintenance plans it

offers and the technical back-up it delivers, it applies a similar strategy when it comes finance and insurance options. I'm impressed at the way its people are always prepared to go the extra mile to meet my needs."

Right from the beginning, he says, maintaining a high uptime record for the Scania fleet has never been a problem, whether the truck is new or used. His son, Triston, who handles much of the technical side of the fleet, says that for the most part, all models in the line-up require only routine servicing to keep them running.

"We've never really had any major setbacks," he says. "The trucks go in for servicing and, usually, they are returned on the same day. If there's any major servicing or maintenance work to be done, they're usually back on the road within two days."

Trucks used for long-haul routes – ferrying mostly manganese and iron ore from Kuruman to Durban – cover about 25 000 km each a month. Tankers used to deliver fuel to areas in Mpumalanga rack up between 4 000 and 7 000 km each a month.

Fuel consumption, says Naidoo, is good across the board – but he's particularly impressed by the figures returned by the fleet's 2019 versions of the R500. "They are really, really economical. We're using 50 to 60 litres



**ABOVE:** Giving great service... one of 14 Scania's in Global Net's vehicle line-up.

**LEFT:** Global Net's Naidoo family (from left): Titus, Pauline, Jaimie-Lee and Triston.

less per truck on long haul routes – if you add that up over a year, the saving is probably equal to the cost of a new R500. That's one of the reasons why I've been able to increase the size of my fleet," he says.

He adds that the number of trucks in the line-up has doubled in the past year – and he's looking to double the figure again in the coming year. "Right from the beginning, I've enjoyed enormous benefits through my association with Scania," Naidoo says. "It's a happy relationship that works well. All members of my family – my wife Pauline, daughter Jaimie-Lee, and Triston – work in the business and know the people at Scania just as well as I do.

"When we have parties to celebrate a business or family occasion, the majority of our guests are Scania employees. In many ways, the company has become part of our family." **F**



**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. Since 2004 he has established and run Transport Logistics Consultants. In May 2015 he became CEO of Fesarta.

# AfCFTA: WILL IT SUCCEED OR FAIL?

## WHEN IT COMES TO IMPLEMENTING AGREEMENTS IN AFRICA, NUMEROUS CHALLENGES NEED TO BE OVERCOME

**T**he recently launched Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is under threat before it even gets started.

The 54 African countries that have signed the agreement still act very much in isolation – particularly their revenue authorities.

Historically, African countries are perfectly capable of talking about issues at a technical level and reaching signed-off agreements at head of state level. However, when it comes to implementation, agreements tend to fall apart, very seldom reaching reality.

Over and above this, the current status of inter-state or regional trade in Africa is being hampered by multiple tariff and non-tariff barriers presented at the many, two-stop border posts mostly in southern, central, western and northern Africa.

Only the eastern African region has taken bold steps to implement a one-stop border post (OSBP) concept at crossing points. This, coupled with the introduction of a single customs territory regime (SCT), has seen time reductions in excess of 50 percent at most border points.

In southern Africa, a bleak picture of border bureaucracy, technical inefficiencies and resulting backlogs of trucks queueing for days to pass through key Southern African Development Community (SADC) transit points has once more emerged, with the regular congested

crossing of Kasumbalesa yet again at the centre of road-haulage hold-ups.

A scene of logistical snags is apparent right across the region, with the worst problems being experienced in Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

At the crossing between Zambia and the DRC, which has regularly made headlines for all the wrong reasons, hundreds of tankers – including those carrying acid and fuel – are parked together, because DRC authorities have introduced seals, electronic tracking and locking devices that are attached to trucks and containers once they have been cleared by customs.

Additionally, a more critical reason for a backlog of trucks heading into the DRC relates to delays in the issuing of Feri certificates – also known as destination certificates – which are needed for entry. Many trucks have been delayed for more than a week, as the company responsible for issuing the certificates simply doesn't have the capacity to deal with the volume of online applications.

Major problems have also been experienced getting through Zimbabwe. Authorities there currently don't have enough electronic seals for road freight passing through the country's borders – Beitbridge, Chirundu to the north, and Forbes on the way to Beira in Mozambique.

Around 900 trucks pass through these borders on a daily basis and, besides the shortage of seals, having

to park while waiting for clearance sees many vehicles' batteries go flat. With Zimbabwe's electricity generation issues – down to less than eight hours of power on a good day – it can take up to 12 hours to recharge the batteries before necessary cargo clearing can be done.

Currently at Forbes Border post there are in excess of 800 trucks –



mostly fuel tankers – waiting for seals. The two main parking areas in Mutari near the border are full to capacity and trucks are overflowing into the road.

The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) has acknowledged the shortage of seals and says that 200 will be delivered very soon. More seals have been procured from Singapore, but they are expected to arrive in Zimbabwe only later this month.

In a nutshell, a hopeless situation prevails for transporters and inter-state or regional trade in the southern African region. On that note, the question remains: Will AfCFTA succeed or fail? What do you think, given the current situation? **F**



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# FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: LEGAL RISK MANAGEMENT IS CRITICAL

## THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BRINGS WITH IT SOME OPERATIONAL RISKS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN. WHAT ABOUT THE LEGAL RISKS THAT RESULT?

**W**e all know that new technologies have already impacted the logistics and supply chain industries, and will continue to do so in the chaotic environment that is the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Until now, the focus has been on how the new technologies could deal with operational risks in the supply chain. This article focuses on the management of the legal risks associated with the use of these new technologies.

The fundamental issue is to ensure that the contracts that are used cater for the operational and other risks arising out of the use of the new technologies. In the supply chain, there are numerous contracts including the land transporter's contract, the terminal and/or consolidator's contract and the bill of lading or charterparty contract. Traditionally these were all recorded on paper.

Some of the new logistics platforms are designed to do away with paper, which can reduce costs and errors and speed up the transfer of documents. These new technologies make the traditional analyses more complex, but they do not change the underlying legal principles by which a contract operates. In a dispute, generally the courts will try to determine what the parties had agreed to by referring to

the applicable contract – whether it is written on paper or recorded on a server.

For example, in the English decision of *Mediterranean Shipping Company SA versus Glencore International AG* [2017] EWCA Civ 365, the Port of Antwerp operated an Electronic Release System (ERS) pursuant to which a PIN code is used to secure the release of goods from the terminal. In this case, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) provided a release note, which contained the PIN codes,

"Delivery Order" must be understood to mean a "ship's delivery order" as defined in section 1(4) of the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1992. As a consequence, the delivery order should have the key attribute of a bill of lading, namely a contractual promise by the carrier to deliver goods to the person identified in the order. The release note provided by MSC, which contained the PIN codes, did not satisfy this test.

The contract should have been drafted to cater for the release of



in exchange for the bill of lading to the shipper, Glencore International AG. Thieves hacked the system, obtained the PIN codes and uplifted the relevant containers at the port.

One of the issues that had to be considered by the court was whether provision of the PIN codes, in exchange for the bill of lading, constituted symbolic delivery of the goods, or, alternatively, whether provision of the PIN was provision of a "Delivery Order" under the contract.

The court rejected both of these arguments and held that the term

the containers against a PIN code. It did not do so and, as a result, MSC was liable to Glencore for the loss suffered as a result of the theft of the containers.

This is a trenchant example of why everyone in the logistics and supply chain industries must do proper legal risk-management assessment when dealing with new technologies. Parties must always ensure that their contracts deal adequately with all aspects of the new technology, and that these new measures comply with the applicable legislation. **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](http://www.focusontransport.co.za) and have your say!

# BUYING SECOND HAND

**PROVIDED THE VEHICLE PURCHASED IS RIGHT FOR THE JOB AND HAS BEEN WELL MAINTAINED, EVEN HIGH-MILEAGE USED TRUCKS CAN PROVE TO BE EXCEEDINGLY DURABLE**

**G**ood sales to customers north of the South African border are helping to keep the country's used-truck market healthy. A number of dealers recently canvassed by **FOCUS** indicate that about 70 percent of sales are to customers who live outside South Africa.

Although the market is supported by a wide selection of used heavy vehicles that are in good condition and with reasonably low mileage on their odometers, local customers still appear to lack the business confidence to commit to a purchase. That said, there has been a slight increase in used-truck sales volumes locally since the general election in May.

According to some dealers, many South African customers tend to have false perceptions regarding the trouble-free life that can be obtained from modern, used trucks. They say that when the right vehicle for the job is purchased and the unit has been well maintained, even high-mileage used trucks can prove to be exceedingly durable.

Used trucks fitted with end-tipping bodies and water tankers are in high demand, indicating that the small end of the construction industry is starting to recover from the downturn. The high demand has created a shortage of used, dedicated tipper chassis that are specially designed for the application.



Potential buyers scouting the market for used five or ten cubic-metre capacity tippers need to take cognisance of problems that may occur when an end-tipping body is mounted on a truck chassis that has not been designed for the application.

- The vehicle will be incorrectly geared for tipper operations, resulting in limited grade and start ability. For tippers working on construction sites this could be a major problem.
- Incorrect gearing will shorten the life of the clutch.
- Fuel consumption is likely to be high.
- Without the correct sub-frame and body-mounting chassis, problems could occur.
- Damage could occur to extra-large fuel tanks that are not required for tipper applications.
- Close coupled power take-off – which is ideal for tipper applications – is not available.
- Rear brake boosters that are mounted too low will be subject to damage when the unit tips the load.

Since these are some of the costly problems that may occur, customers are advised to check with the truck manufacturer that the used tipper they intend to buy was built as a dedicated model.

Buyers of used tippers should also take careful note of the body that is fitted to the vehicle. They should check that it has been built by a reputable bodybuilder and that service and parts for all of the associated systems are readily available countrywide.

In addition, they should check that the hydraulic power take-off system is close coupled, which helps to eliminate the need for continual maintenance of the PTO driveshaft.

Considering the problems that could result from purchasing the wrong vehicle, potential buyers are advised to consider a used truck from an established dealer – one that has a good reputation as a provider of back-up service and support.

Warranties that provide peace of mind are also recommended. There are many dealers who recondition and refurbish used trucks before they sell them, sometimes to the extent that it is difficult to tell at a glance that the vehicle is second hand.

Finally, when making the decision to buy a used truck instead of a new truck, major considerations should be the job to be undertaken, as well as the back-up support that is available from the dealer and the truck manufacturer. **F**

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

# ENERGY DENIAL?

**WORLDWIDE, THE NET IS SLOWLY CLOSING IN ON OUR WASTEFUL USE OF ENERGY. THREE ARTICLES IN THE BUSINESS DAY OF JUNE 18 UNDERLINED SOME REALITIES THAT SOUTH AFRICA, IN PARTICULAR, SHOULD HAVE STARTED TO FACE, BUT WE SEEM TO PREFER BEING IN DENIAL**

The first article reported on Norway's decision to stop investing in fossil fuels in favour of clean energy. Its sovereign wealth fund is the largest in the world, with a trillion dollars under management. That adds up to 1.3 percent of every listed company in the world, and includes US\$ 6.4 billion invested in South African companies. It won't be long before we will start having to look for alternative sources of money to finance our own wasteful habits.

Critics of Norway are quite correct to accuse it of hypocrisy, saying that it merely exports its oil, gas and iron ore to other countries creating real pollution elsewhere. To its credit, though, Norway made a point of building up a war chest for times like this – unlike South Africa, which has drifted from one crisis to the next.

The second article told us that the state of Virginia – home to the largest-known deposit of uranium in the United States – has refused permission to a company called Virginia Uranium (VU) to actually dig for the stuff.

Unhappy with the judgment, VU went to the Supreme Court, where it lost in a 6-3 decision. Whether it will take this matter further remains to be seen, but other states such as Indiana, Oregon, Massachusetts and – wait for it – Texas, support the state of

Virginia. They clearly want to protect their rights over the riches beneath their soil.

VU claims that the mine will create more than a thousand jobs and pump billions of dollars into the local economy. That kind of argument, much loved by the promoters of schemes like the Gautrain, needs to be questioned more robustly from now on.

The third article, written by an assistant editor of the *Financial Mail*, noted: "Price stability is a necessary ingredient for a sustainable, growing economy. (It) provides certainty, improves planning and supports confidence – all of which are essential in driving economic activity."

I think most people would agree, but why then has no economist drawn attention to the way the fuel price jumps around in South Africa? This comment came in the same month that the fuel price dropped by around 90 cents per litre. Did minibus-taxi fares come down as a result of the decrease? I asked a few taxi passengers about it and they stared at me blankly. Did transport rates generally come down? I don't think so.

A half-hearted debate has now started in South Africa about the balance between environmental and public safety issues on the one hand, and economic benefits on the other, but public transport doesn't feature in it.

Norway was pro-active and managed its oil and gas windfall by saving up for a rainy day.

This was not the case in South Africa, which has limited oil reserves, forcing us to import the stuff. We then waste oil in private vehicles carrying

1.3 people to work and back. On the public transport side, oil is used in minibus taxis on busy routes, which should have been electrified long ago.

When it comes to public transport, South Africa has failed to develop beyond the mindset that prevailed in the 1950s. That was when half-empty "white" buses sailed past black passengers wanting to get on, because the rear ten seats allocated to blacks were already occupied. Today, buses and minibus taxis drag empty seats around our cities when a



proper plan would have sorted them out, reducing the need for expensive cars.

Now we have a new minister of transport, and there is talk of building a high-speed railway line from the coast to Musina. What nonsense.

We need to learn how to fix what is already there, but our universities are producing graduates who don't know the difference between a bus and a bicycle. Together with consultants and government officials, our academics present meaningless research articles and PowerPoint presentations at one conference after the other.

Our lazy approach to public transport is hurting the economy. **F**





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# FACE TO FACE WITH GÖRAN NYBERG

JARLATH SWEENEY GOES FACE TO FACE WITH GÖRAN NYBERG, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR SALES AND MARKETING AT MAN TRUCK & BUS



W

**What was your perception of the MAN brand prior to joining and subsequently having got to know the product?**

That is a relevant point, because when I left Europe in 2012 I had been competing with MAN for many years. I'd always had great respect for the brand, but, honestly, I had a hard time getting my head around what it stands for. Volvo has always been about safety, for example, but coming back to Europe six years later, I have seen that MAN has started a journey to really build up the brand again, sharpening up the messages that are relevant to recreate the personality, profile and backbone of the brand, which I think is absolutely critical.

A well-engineered product is beneficial for those using it, because they know how good it is. In today's environment, however, you need to shout about it. I think creating a strong profile of the brand is most important and, so far, the team has done a great job of that.

**Surely customer satisfaction is important, too?**

Yes, undoubtedly. Ensuring customer satisfaction is key. Once we start performing on a higher level of customer satisfaction, brand perception and brand strength will come with it. We are on a good path and the brand has good momentum.

We have a strong solid product range, which is perhaps a bit classic, but we are working hard on a renewal programme. So, I think it is a good time to join this company,

because a lot of things are lined up to take the next step.

**In relation to pride in their trucks, the top Scandinavian brands enjoy a loyal following. Do you think that MAN has that same level of desirability, or is this something that needs to be worked on?**

Yes, it definitely needs work. One should always start with the users of our products who are really loyal, appreciative of the brand and proud of ownership, but it's a perception that is lower than we desire, and is something that is a part of our journey to develop the brand. It's very important – and taking a different approach to how to communicate will be part of our future in the way we go to market.

**MAN has always been associated with the founder of the diesel engine, Rudolf Diesel. Do you think that this link will continue to be as strong into the future?**

I would say that, in the near future, the diesel engine will still be a very important part of the equation, and the latest generation of diesel technology we have developed is really taking a big step forward.

As an original equipment manufacturer, we have invested heavily in research and development to understand the most feasible way to market our brand. It doesn't matter if we have a good solution, if it doesn't bring down the total cost of ownership (TCO), we will fail. So, technology versus costs need to go hand in hand, together with quality and reliability, because reliability is part of the backbone and core of MAN.

All stakeholders – including legislators, truck manufacturers and energy producers – need to come together and agree on the way forward on carbon reduction, because today it's scattered. There is lots of focus on our sector. We don't mind that, but the prerequisite for us is to deliver a feasible solution that also has the support in the market. It needs to be a shared responsibility.

I think that it's a bit unfair that there is 100-percent attention on the truck manufacturers. We will do our part, but if this is going to work and get the benefits that are needed for the environment, then we all have to work together. That's not happening now and 2025 is just around the corner. So, I'm nervous that the targets will fail for reasons outside of our control.

#### Where do electric powertrains fit into this plan?

The legislation needs to cover the entire basis and, as I said, the prerequisite is for us to deliver a feasible solution, because it doesn't matter if we produce a range of electric vehicles that nobody sees the value in buying and we cannot force them to take them up.

Whether it's compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), hydrogen, electric vehicles, or whatever, MAN Truck & Bus has a broad product portfolio. Then of course we have the well-to-wheel discussion, in that it

RIO platform, but it's like a smartphone; the customer buys it to have access for private and business needs.

Our strategy is to enable us to be more customer orientated and customer focused and have an open interface that fulfils whatever needs a customer has; small or large – we need to have that. Let's see what pans out in the future, but we definitely want to make sure that we develop services that may be more unique to vehicles, but we will also work with partners in the wider perspective, as it is all part of logistics.



“

Once we start performing on a higher level of customer satisfaction, brand perception and brand strength will come with it.



needs to be fixed and settled, because we can't accept a surprise. We might deliver a solution that is applicable in 2025, and then if suddenly in 2027 the energy we are using is not acceptable anymore, we will all have failed.

#### Moving on to connectivity and telematics and the RIO platform that MAN has developed, is this something that will be rolled out not only for the trucks, but also for the buses?

Our approach to connectivity is to have an open platform and, of course, our pan-European offering is based on the

Actually, we are quite far along with bus and coach operators. The RIO box is open platform and the opportunities are huge. It's all about operations becoming more efficient – the margins are getting smaller, especially for the bus and coach operators, and we can deliver digital solutions through helping customers operate their products more efficiently by taking a close look at the performance of their fleets. **F**

• Jarlath Sweeney is the owner of Fleet Publications, the largest publisher of transport-related magazines in Ireland. Read Fleet Transport here: <https://fleet.ie/>

# NEW BRAND, NEW TECH, NEW RFA



**ALONG WITH NEW BRANDING, THE ROAD FREIGHT ASSOCIATION (RFA) INTRODUCED DELEGATES TO NEW TECHNOLOGY AT ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE – A FITTING INTRODUCTION WITH A THEME OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AT THE HEART OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS. MARISKA MORRIS ATTENDED**

**W**hile much of the annual RFA Conference that delegates know and love remained the same, the Association introduced a bit more flair to the 2019 edition, which was held at the Royal Swaziland Hotel and Spa in Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, from August 11 to 13.

As always, the conference provided delegates with expert insights into developments within the southern African road freight industry and the opportunity to network through a series of social events. Alongside the two-day conference, there was a Mexican-themed welcome function, a golf day and a three-course gala dinner with a Las Vegas theme. Welcome drinks for the gala dinner were sponsored by Mercedes-Benz Trucks.

Delegates also had the opportunity to test their driving skills in the Mercedes-Benz Actros at the Truck Test, which was held outside the conference centre.

This year there was a new look to the RFA and the conference sessions. As RFA CEO Gavin Kelly explained: "There is new branding, and there are new concepts and colours. The Association needs to change. We need to make sure government understands that we are the professional road-freight operators who lead in the country."

Along with the new red and black branding, the Association introduced some new technology, which allowed delegates to submit questions and rate the presentations immediately from their cellphones. The programme also provided some entertainment between sessions with short quizzes and prizes.

All the RFA innovations were perfectly on trend with a key focus of the conference: the impact of emerging technologies on the South African road freight industry. The conversation focused on technologies born from global efforts to fight climate change, such as electric vehicles (EVs).

### **ELECTRIC IS COMING**

The experts disagreed on the extent to which EVs will form part of the future of road transportation in South Africa, but there was no question about whether they would be present. Although EV sales in South Africa make up less than one percent of total vehicle sales, the global industry is booming.

As Khanyiselo Kumalo, energy analyst at Green Cape, stated: "The electric vehicle market is growing exponentially. There is a lot of hype and innovation being pumped into the industry, which is estimated at US\$ 118 billion (R1,7 trillion), with passenger vehicles still dominating the industry."

There are several reasons for countries to adopt the technology. For South Africa, the key motivations should be meeting requirements set out in the Paris Agreement on climate change and protecting the automotive industry. Kumalo explained that the automotive industry risks losing business as more countries ban the sale of new vehicles with internal combustion engines.

"Where will these vehicles go if the markets to which we are exporting no longer accept internal combustion

engines?" Kumalo asked. "We need to make sure that local passenger-vehicle manufacturers can keep up with global market trends and changes." Investing in the EV market can also offer South Africa unique opportunities in the lithium-battery manufacturing sector.

Kumalo explained: "There are five key raw materials that are important in manufacturing the lithium batteries used in EVs. South Africa is home to two of those materials." Presently, South Africa exports the raw mineral and then imports the reworked product at a higher price. There is an opportunity to refine the material before exporting it.

While the industry might offer many opportunities, the adoption of EVs in South Africa will depend to a great extent on whether the price of the lithium batteries declines, as the cost of batteries is the main contributing factor to the high cost of EVs.

"One of the factors that can derail the market is battery price, which is not declining as expected. As a result, it will



take that much longer for EVs to be as affordable as petrol or diesel-powered vehicles," Kumalo said.

If EVs do become more affordable, Kumalo expects public transport and vehicle fleets to be the main adopters of the technology. While the team at Green Cape seem optimistic about the future of EVs, Arthur Goldstuck, MD of World Wide Worx, warned against the "hype cycle", which companies experienced with the Fourth Industrial Revolution and artificial intelligence (AI) technology.

### **AI AND AUTONOMOUS DRIVING**

Last year, many industries were told to invest in AI technology or run the risk of being left behind. A survey by World Wide Worx found that 13 percent of companies were using this technology with an additional 63 percent planning to invest in it during 2019.

However, when a similar survey was conducted this year, the company found that there had been no new investment in AI technology, and that interest had declined to 21 percent, simply because the technology was too expensive and there was a lack of adequate skills.

Instead, Goldstuck believes that technology such as AI

will be introduced more gradually. In the EV market, hybrid vehicles offer a more gradual shift to electric as is evident in the high number of sales of these vehicles. Kumalo explained: "People are not ready to go fully electric. They still want the convenience offered by a petrol or diesel-powered engine."

Similarly, AI technology and autonomous driving vehicles will be introduced more gradually, according to Goldstuck. He noted: "The vehicle of the near future will tell the drivers what to do as they drive. The next generation will optimise the performance of the vehicle while driving without the driver even realising it."

"South African roads are not ready for self-driving vehicles. What they are ready for is driver-assist technology, such as collision warning and lane assist, which is already available in some vehicles. These are forms of autonomous driving."

Like EVs, Goldstuck believes that AI is inevitable. "There is a massive change coming, because this technology is intruding into every aspect of business and consumer activity. No one is unaffected by it. We should look at how others in the industry are using this technology, rather than how to avoid using it," he explained.

#### FOSSIL STILL FUELLING THE COUNTRY

As the industry waits for the slow adoption of these technologies, Kevin Baardt, head of strategic projects at the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA), predicts that fossil fuel will remain the predominant power source for road transport.

During his presentation at the RFA Conference, Baardt noted that EVs will make up only 32 percent of the market by 2060. He explained: "Where transport is concerned, and considering the reliance on fossil fuels, oil is likely to still be the dominant energy carrier along with biofuel and gas. That is today's view point; it can change tomorrow."

Baardt believes that cleaner fuel should be a priority.

"Fuel quality is critical to achieving acceptable environmental performance of internal combustion engines," he said.

He explained that, according to research, emissions from vehicles that run on Euro-6 engines are cleaner than the ambient air quality. In addition, these vehicles produce less particle emissions compared to their electric counterparts.

Particle or particulate matter (PM) refers to solid particles or liquid droplets found in the air. There can be a great impact on the respiratory and cardiovascular health of people who come into contact with these particles.

"If you compare a Euro-6 vehicle with an EV, the PM emissions from the Euro-6 vehicle are less than that of an EV, because an EV is a heavier vehicle with more loaded brakes, which result in more particle emissions," Baardt explained.

Unfortunately, South Africa is not yet able to produce the cleaner fuel required for a Euro-6 engine. However, these clean fuels are being produced in other African countries like Kenya.

#### NO MORE IGNORING THE CHANGES

Whatever the solution, South Africa can't ignore the need for greener transport much longer. Liesl de Wet, who provides strategic support for the RFA, spoke about green trucking at the conference and shared some very concerning statistics including the fact that the global temperature has risen by one degree.

"Back in 2016, the world came together and agreed that in order to prevent runaway climate change, the global temperature can't warm by more than 1,5 degrees," De Wet explained.

"There is thus only half a degree to play with. Scientists predict that unless global emissions decline by 45 percent by 2025 and reach net zero by 2050, the world won't achieve its goal. Currently, the world is heading for a two- to three-degree increase in global temperature."



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## ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

In addition to discussions around various new technologies and global warming, the conference also provided some insights into the economy and political situation of the country. Political analyst Ongama Mtimka shared some insights into the challenges facing President Cyril Ramaphosa and the ANC. He estimated political stability will be achieved only in 2029.

"I highlight that election year, as I think South Africa will be emerging from a coalition government, which will take place in 2024. The self-destructive momentum of the governing party will most likely continue, and it will lose a significant portion of the national vote in 2024," Mtimka explained.



**ABOVE:** (From the left) Ben Bezuidenhout, Khanyiselo Kumalo, Kevin Baardt and Arend du Preez discuss the future of the trucking industry at the 2019 RFA Conference.

**RIGHT:** RFA CEO Gavin Kelly provides delegates with some insights into the work done by the Association in the past year.

While South Africa still faces some political unrest, Mtimka felt that institutions such as the courts will help provide some stability. Although there is some uncertainty around land reform, Mtimka noted that South Africans have a very constitutional view on policies, thus no land reform policy will be passed that is unconstitutional.

This is important, as respecting property rights is essential to a successful economy, as economist Dawie Roodt pointed out at the conference. He shared some insights into the expected economic growth in South Africa and explained that, while South Africa isn't in a technical recession, the country is getting poorer.

A technical recession is when there are two consecutive quarters in which the economy contracts. However, this doesn't necessarily mean a country is becoming poorer.

"If the population is growing at a rate of one percent and the economy is growing at a rate of two percent, then, on a per capita basis, the country is getting wealthier. If the population is growing at minus one percent and the economy is not growing at all, the country is still getting wealthier on a per capita basis," Roodt pointed out.

He describes a recession as any growth, or lack thereof, which results in a decline of wealth for the population. Although Roodt predicts growth in the second quarter, this doesn't mean South Africans are becoming wealthier.

"Growth in the first quarter was very low. This means that growth in the second quarter will have been even lower," he said. South Africans will continue to become poorer over

the next two years as the economy continues to grow very slowly.

"My expectation for economic growth this year is probably around half a percent or lower, with a similar growth next year," Roodt predicted. "South Africa needs to grow its economy by roughly five percent per annum. We are not going to get there with the current economic policies."

## INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Kelly also used the opportunity to share some information about the work being undertaken by the RFA and some expectations in the industry. He noted: "It has been a difficult year, and many have felt the lashing tongue of the foreign driver issue. The road ahead for seems to be filled with potholes and challenges. We need to remain positive.

"One thing that became very clear during the foreign truck-driver issue is that without trucks South Africa truly did come to a standstill. Somewhere along the road, everything was on the back of a truck. Whether that truck is one with a 1,5-t payload or 200-t payload, road freight plays a huge role in the lives of every person in southern Africa."

The Association sat down to talk to the individuals involved in the burning of trucks. Kelly said: "From that moment going forward, 90 percent of the attacks stopped.



Even the attacks on the transport operators who are not members of the RFA stopped.

"If there was any doubt about the value of the council and the RFA's relationship with the unions, this was very good example of why we need to have these discussions. While there have been some sporadic attacks, the uncontrolled violence has stopped. We've lost drivers, trucks and money, but the violence has stopped."

He noted that there have also been fewer hijackings and urged operators to report any incidents within an hour to assist in recovering the vehicle. Kelly also urged transport operators to pay their e-tolls.

"I don't think e-tolls will go away. If this was going to happen, it would have happened a long time ago. Remember, it remains illegal to not pay e-toll bills," he pointed out. Kelly also touched on some unresolved policy changes, such as the high-cube container legislation, which will be revisited only at the end of 2019.

The 2019 RFA Conference once again provided the road freight industry of southern Africa with some valuable insights. The industry can look forward to what the new and improved RFA will have to offer in the coming months. **F**





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# OVERCOMING FLEET-MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

**A RECENT GLOBAL SURVEY OF SMALL TO MEDIUM ENTERPRISES BY TOMTOM TELEMATICS HAS IDENTIFIED FIVE OF THE TOP CHALLENGES FACED BY FLEET MANAGERS**

**F**

leet operators are faced with several challenges that impact both productivity and profitability, according to a recent international survey conducted by TomTom Telematics.

While efficiency is perceived to be the foundation upon which good fleet management is built, most fleet managers who responded to the survey said they found themselves immersed in routine administrative tasks that were time-consuming and from which the companies at which they worked gained little advantage.

The study – which involved over 1 000 small to medium-sized enterprises – found that fleet managers were frustrated by the expense, time ineffectiveness and potential for human error caused by handling routine tasks.

“Managers want digital solutions to take care of routine tasks. This fact came up again and again,” says Beverly Wise, TomTom’s sales director in the United Kingdom (UK). She said of the top five challenges identified by fleet managers, excessive time spent on administrative tasks was perceived to be among the most wasteful.

"It might not appear as a cost on the financial statement, but time spent fixing routine administration problems is an expense that can easily add up," Wise maintains. "Work that ties up people's time ultimately limits the effort put into revenue-generating activities."

In TomTom's study, 49 percent of fleet managers said that at least one of their team members spent up to two hours each day sorting out administrative issues. "Paper-based systems invariably add more layers to administrative work, slowing down productivity. By embracing digitised workflows, admin tasks can be eased considerably, simultaneously reducing the risk of human error and miscommunication," Wise says.

TomTom found that 26 percent of respondents used fully automated systems to manage vehicle expenses, with 34 percent agreeing that vehicles used for company business tended to drain more money than allowed for by their budgets – another of the factors identified as a top challenge.

In this respect, good fuel management was seen as a priority, with 66 percent of respondents indicating that they could do more to reduce fuel costs. Says Wise: "To reduce fuel usage, fleet managers need to identify fuel-consumption trends within their fleets – they can change only what they track. Again, this is where digitisation can play a vital role in overcoming problems."

The survey found that while 81 percent of respondents agreed that digitised solutions could help to improve a fleet's fuel economy, many still relied on manual processes in their attempts to effect change. Says Wise: "Implementing telematics means fleet managers can use data – the fuel for modern business efficiency – to power productivity and save time and money."

In the case of fuel usage, she maintains, telematics could be used to track consumption in real time, check for instances of over use, monitor driver behaviour, create efficient routes and identify continuous-move opportunities, among other applications.

"Telematics are designed to support efficient, time-effective operations, deliver accurate information and reduce the administrative load. In the end, having access to, and control over, this type of information is crucial in helping to reduce the total cost of vehicle ownership.

"For example, fleet managers can use data on fuel consumption to identify areas of excess and data on driving behaviour to improve driving methods and reduce insurance premiums. The benefits are extensive."

Vehicle maintenance was another critical point identified in the survey as a top challenge with, respondents stressing the need to keep fleet vehicles running smoothly, but indicating that staying up to date with maintenance schedules and service requirements was a time-consuming challenge.

"This is another area in which decision-makers are

using automation to cut out inefficiencies," says Wise. "Digitised solutions offer the benefit of regular service and maintenance reminders based on date, mileage or even hours of use."

She adds that some fleet managers canvassed indicated that they had discovered the benefits of telematics in alerting them to signs of vehicle malfunction, enabling remedial action to be taken before the vehicle suffered a breakdown.

Relaying messages accurately to drivers of vehicles on the road was perceived as another significant impediment to the fleet manager's smooth-running day, with 36 percent of respondents saying that communicating schedules or a change of instructions often posed difficulties.



Good fuel management was seen as a priority, with 66 percent of respondents indicating that they could do more to reduce fuel costs.

Fifty-one percent said the inability of their field teams to follow assigned agendas had a negative impact on their businesses, while 53 percent indicated that they were not sure if their drivers were behaving safely on the road. Fifty-five percent of respondents agreed they had issues regarding miscommunication with their field teams and 58 percent said that one in three deliveries failed to reach customers within the initial estimated time of arrival (ETA).

"More and more transport organisations are turning to software and digital solutions to streamline and simplify the way they manage their people in the field. While messages and orders can be sent with greater clarity to the driver, the vehicles can send automated updates back to the office regarding the status of the order and the ETA," says Wise.

She adds: "Businesses need to adapt to consumer expectations, and fleet management assists in ensuring that quality customer service is provided. This is critical in terms of business survival."

According to TomTom, the survey, which was conducted earlier this year, received responses from 1 350 fleet decision-makers across a variety of industries, including construction, engineering, food and beverage, delivery, healthcare, hospitality, real estate, retail, telecommunications and utilities. The research was conducted in partnership with OnePoll in the UK, France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, the United States, Poland, Sweden and Denmark. **F**



# FUSO EXTENDS SA LINE-UP

**FUSO TRUCKS, A PART OF DAIMLER TRUCKS & BUSES SOUTHERN AFRICA, HAS EXTENDED ITS LOCAL MODEL LINE-UP AND ADDED NEW FEATURES TO POPULAR DERIVATIVES IN ITS RANGE**

J

apanese truck manufacturer Fuso has introduced four new models to South Africa – and facelifted a further five – in a bid to capitalise on the brand's growing popularity in the southern African region.

Speaking in Centurion at the launch of the F12-170, the FJ 18-280 in short- and long-wheelbase form, and the FJ26-280 – as well as the reintroduction of facelifted models in the FA9-137, FJ16-230 and FJ26-280C line-ups – Jasper Hafkamp, CEO of Daimler Truck and Bus South Africa, said the brand's goal was to achieve a ten-percent market share by the end of 2020.

"At the end of last year, Fuso's share of the market stood at 5,3 percent. We would like to see that increase to 7,0 percent by the end of this year, and to ten percent by the end of 2020," he said. "Despite an unpredictable economy, our projections show that there is likely to be growth in the construction, distribution and long-haul segments of the market. We believe the models we have introduced will go a long way to meeting the needs of those sectors."

Hafkamp said in the 12 months since July last year, Fuso's order intake had increased by 23 percent, with four out of every ten of the brand's trucks sold going to new customers. "Fuso trucks are known for their reliability, quality and fuel efficiency," he said. "What's more, the brand shares technology and development expertise with Mercedes-Benz, so there's plenty of pedigree in the nameplate. One of our major aims in the southern African region is to build customer loyalty."

Ziyad Gaga, head of Fuso Trucks, reiterated that introduction of the new models and the upgrading of the old was to ensure that the brand's products were constantly improved to meet customer needs. He listed

performance, fuel-efficiency, safety and driver comfort as being among the features that had received the attention of development teams.

"Engines have been equipped with E-viscous fans that operate only when necessary, improving fuel economy by reducing the load on the powertrain. Variable engine rev control provides demand-based rpm settings, while the addition of cruise control helps to promote fatigue-free driving and reduce fuel consumption on the open road."

To add comfort to the cabin environment, he said windscreens now incorporated sun filters. Additional cabin roof storage provided more space and convenience for drivers. Audio systems had been added and LED lamps installed for better interior illumination and improved aesthetics. A seat-belt reminder was another feature that promoted safety, along with dual-chamber headlamps that included daytime running lights.

"All in all, the various safety features complement strong and sturdy vehicles. With a reputation for top class ability across a range of applications, the new and upgraded Fuso trucks are attractive, reliable, economical and comfortable," Gaga said.

He added: "We continue to grow in the various market segments in which we compete as a result of constantly being in close contact with our customers. This means we know that one of the major challenges faced by customers is the inherent complexity of operating in the current transport industry.

"Simplicity applies to providing vehicles that are flexible, allowing for a wide number of applications. Superior trucks are crucial to all market segments. Customers also demand we provide them with simply better trucks in order to achieve their objectives." **F**

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# BAKKIE PROSPECTS ON THE RISE



**HIGH DEMAND FOR LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLES IN SOUTH AFRICA IS DRIVING A CONSUMER TREND THAT SIGNALS A SHIFT AWAY FROM THE PASSENGER-CAR MARKET. WYNTER MURDOCH REPORTS**

S

outh Africa's light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment represents one of the few sectors of the automotive market that appears to have retained significant consumer backing, despite the crippling effect of the country's recessionary economy on purchasing power.

New-vehicle sales figures for July indicated that, while the total market dropped by 3,7 percent to 46 077 units compared with figures for the corresponding month last year, consumers remained keen to part with hard-earned cash in favour of bakkies and vans.

At least, that's how Ghana Msibi, executive head of motor at finance house WesBank, interprets the statistics. He says that with 13 852 vehicles sold in the month in the LCV sector – an increase of 2,9 percent against sales recorded in July last year – consumer allegiance appears to have shifted away from the passenger-car market where, comparatively, sales declined by a hefty 8,2 percent to 29 477 units. That means, in effect, that LCV sales in July amounted to almost half the total achieved by cars.

"On a year-to-date basis, sales of new passenger cars are down by 5,4 percent, while the LCV market is down by one percent," Msibi says, pointing out that the motor trade is feeling the effects of significantly reduced consumer spending power, partly as a result of job retrenchments that have cut employment numbers across a variety of sectors.

So, why the apparent shift of market towards LCVs? Some industry observers believe South Africa's love for the bakkie stems from the practical benefits it offers as both workhorse and leisure vehicle. With employment trends indicating a rise in the number of self-employed service providers and independent contractors, vehicles that can be used for business purposes during the week and as recreational vehicles on weekends are growing in popularity.

The country's top-selling vehicle in July – Toyota's Hilux, which accounted for 2 996 units – has long been a first-choice purchase among bakkie buyers with the vehicle's reputation for quality, durability, reliability, refinement and safety helping to keep it at the top of the sales charts.

Calvyn Hamman, head of sales and marketing at Toyota South Africa Motors, says there are not many locally manufactured vehicles that can claim the iconic status that the Hilux has achieved in South Africa. "Not only has it sold more than a million units locally since its introduction 50 years ago, it continues to be a sales sensation even in the trying economic climate we are experiencing."

Additionally, the model sealed the second quarter of 2019 with its highest-ever recorded monthly sales total in South Africa. The June figure – 4 770 units – represented 35 units more than the previous highest total, recorded in 2011. In setting the benchmark, double-cab versions of the model accounted for 1 885 units, Xtra cabs for 1 648 units and single cabs for 1 237 units.

"We're delighted with the strong sales we've had," says Hamman. "Clearly, being a tried and trusted brand is a strong purchasing factor in the current economy."

Toyota is not alone in setting the LCV pace. Ford's sales in the segment in July totalled 2 266 units, the bulk of purchases comprising newly launched Ranger double-cab derivatives, which, like the superseded version, are proving to be a success story for the brand.

According to Doreen Mashinini, the company's general manager for marketing, the Ranger remains not only one of South Africa's top-selling vehicles, but also one of the country's leading LCV exports to markets in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Manufactured at Ford's Silverton plant near Pretoria, the new model features styling changes as well as technologies

designed to help boost its reputation for safety, refinement, convenience and comfort – factors considered vitally important to the consumer market.

"With a choice of new diesel engines, a revolutionary new ten-speed automatic gearbox and a revised suspension set-up, this is by far the biggest upgrade yet for the current-generation Ranger," Mashinini adds.

To accommodate export as well as local orders for the model – as well as for its high-performance sibling, the Ranger Raptor, and the Everest SUV with which it shares a platform – last month Ford introduced a third shift at the plant.

Upgraded in 2017 as part of a R3-billion investment aimed at increasing output at Silverton from 124 000 vehicles a year to 168 000, the third shift adds 214 units a day to production, bringing the total number of models coming off the assembly line every 24 hours to 720.

"Introduction of the third shift allows us to satisfy the strong demand from customers in South Africa, as well as for our crucial exports to 148 markets around the world," says Ockert Berry, vice president of operations for Ford Middle East and Africa.

He says the extra shift has created 1 200 new jobs at the plant, taking Ford's total employment in South Africa to

inclusive growth," he said.

Assembly of the Navara range at Rosslyn is scheduled to begin next year, and will grow the plant's production output by more than 50 percent. Currently, derivatives in the best-selling NP200 range – a model which is consistently among the country's top-five LCV choices, accounting for about 2 000 units a month – as well as the NP300 Hardbody, are among the vehicles manufactured at the plant.

Echoing his executive counterpart at Ford, Mike Whitfield, managing director of the Nissan Group of Africa, says in order to meet local and export demand, a two-shift operation will be required to accommodate the Navara's production. "This alone will result in the creation of an additional 400 jobs," he says. "Hundreds more vacancies will be created, though, at Nissan as well as within the local component-supplier industry."

He adds: "The company has a deep understanding of the need to invest in skills development in a meaningful way – not just for our benefit, in terms of having a skilled workforce at our technologically advanced vehicle-manufacturing plant; but for the benefit of all the eager, young minds in this country, who are simply seeking opportunities to improve themselves."

With sales of double-cab bakkies outnumbering those of single-cab derivatives across the LCV range, it's not surprising that Mazda South Africa has decided that its upcoming BT50 – to be launched in 2021 as replacement for its eight-year-old, Ford-based equivalent – will not include a single-cab workhorse.

Craig Roberts, Mazda SA's managing director, says the new model, developed in collaboration with Isuzu, will be aimed at private buyers who, in the main, represent leisure users rather than commercial fleet operators. "That's where we think the consumer trend is heading," he says, adding that since Mazda considers the bakkie to be representative of a true crossover vehicle, the upcoming version will incorporate premium-quality features aimed at making it a competitive rival to SUVs.

"I've seen the styling designs for the new vehicle," he says, "and the overall look is far

more muscular than that of the model it will supersede. Also, to reinforce premium-quality concepts, it will sport a cabin comparable to that of the current Mazda CX-5's. I think the strategy will prove right for the South African market."

Roberts adds that though the launch of the vehicle remains a long way off, the model is seen as imperative from a brand perspective. "In terms of sales, South Africa represents only fractionally over one percent of Mazda's annual global volume – yet our performance here is regarded as important to the company's overall success.

"From a local perspective, our share of the market is equally vital. We're in business to generate a profit, and we have to ensure a realistic line-up of vehicles that is going to help us to achieve that aim. In terms of our 'more premium' strategy, we are committed to delivering quality products that will move the needle for brand value. The BT50 will play an important role in meeting that objective." **F**



approximately 5 500 employees. At the same time, it has bolstered employment at component-supplier companies by adding around 10 000 jobs to the sector. "In total, Ford's local vehicle-assembly operations now support some 60 000 jobs within the total value chain," Berry maintains.

It's not only consumers who think locally manufactured LCVs are worth sustaining. South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, thinks so, too. In a recent address delivered at Nissan's assembly plant at Rosslyn – at an event to announce that the company would add the full range of Navara bakkies to its local production schedule, again representing a multi-million-rand investment – Ramaphosa acknowledged that the automotive sector formed an essential part of the industrialisation of the South African economy.

"The sector is a reliable partner, but it is also a dependable ally, as it has demonstrated by this investment, on our path to position manufacturing as a catalyst to development and



# TRITON'S NEW MESSAGE

**MITSUBISHI'S IMPROVED, FIFTH-GENERATION TRITON BAKKIE FEELS NEARLY AS REFINED AS A COMFORTABLE SUV AND, FOR A PICK-UP, PROVES REMARKABLY EASY TO MANOEUVRE – WHETHER IN TOWN OR WHEN DRIVING OFF-ROAD. IT BOASTS OTHER ATTRACTIVE ATTRIBUTES, TOO.**  
**WYNTER MURDOCH REPORTS**

**F**

ollowing hard in the wheel tracks of the newly launched Eclipse Cross SUV, Mitsubishi Motors South Africa recently unveiled locally its new Triton double-cab bakkie – the vehicle making its debut here less than six months after its international

reveal.

The fifth-generation model – which celebrates 40 years of Mitsubishi bakkie production – is regarded as one of the most strategically important in the brand's line-up and the latest version features a variety of styling, technology and engineering upgrades.

"The new, tough-looking Triton is significantly more competitive than its predecessor," says Nic Campbell, GM of Mitsubishi Motors South Africa. "Its enhancements and refinements have been aimed at making it even more comfortable, durable and reliable than before."

Though many of the changes are under the skin, the remade model features a new-look face that incorporates the latest iteration of the brand's Dynamic Shield design concept. A high bonnet – underscored by imposing, swept back headlight clusters, large fog-light housings and a broad radiator grille – help to add visual width to the front end, aided by extended wheel-arch flares along the flanks, correspondingly styled crease lines on the doors and expansive running boards.

Similarly, the rear end has been styled to look broader than it is, with lighting clusters lapping the outside extremities of the bodywork and the beefy outline of the three-section bumper serving to emphasise width.

The visual tricks help to disguise the fact that the Triton

is narrower than the majority of its competitors – it has a shorter wheelbase, too – but it's my guess that you'd be hard-pressed to notice that fact unless the vehicle was parked alongside its rivals.

Incidentally, there are advantages to the model's dimensions – its turning circle is around 11,5 m, making it almost car-like to manoeuvre in parking lots, a trait not usually associated with bakkies. Also, its less extensive dimensions help it to cope well in off-road situations when negotiating tight tracks. And, though its cabin is snug, the interior retains an airy, accommodating feel.

To add appeal to the range, three new colours have been introduced – Sunflare Orange, Diamond White Metallic and Graphite Grey Metallic. Further, hydraulic dampers have been added to the tailgate's hinging mechanism to automatically control its rate of descent on opening – an innovative, handy feature that takes the strain out of having to manhandle a weighty slab of metal.

The enhanced Super Select II four-wheel-drive system – tested on a track that included deep axle twisters, steep inclines and descents, mud, rock and gravel – shows good traction capability, while a new, six-speed automatic gearbox impresses for its well-spaced cogs and smooth gear changes.

Though the engine remains unchanged, it appears well-suited to the new vehicle – the diesel-fed, four-cylinder, turbocharged, intercooled, 2,4-litre MIVEC unit delivering 133 kW and 430 Nm.

During a drive on a 300-km route that included plenty of low-range activity; long gravel sections tackled in four-wheel high-range; as well as highway travel to and from



the test venue, the vehicle never wanted for power, easily maintaining the 120-km/h speed limit on the open road and, when in off-road mode, offering good amounts of torque from low down in the rev range.

In terms of fuel consumption, Mitsubishi's spokesmen claim a combined cycle figure of 7,6 litres per 100 km for the auto-transmission version, and 7,5 litres per 100 km for the six-speed manual-shift equivalent – good enough to give each of the derivatives a range of around 1 000 km on the open road thanks to a fuel tank that holds 75 litres.

Cruising in the Triton is a pleasant experience. There's little engine or wind noise and the well-appointed cabin helps to reinforce a feeling of overall refinement. Leather covered seats are supportive and well bolstered, while the driving position offers a commanding view.

Finishes are of premium quality – apart from leather there's plenty of tasteful metal trim that is complemented by soft-touch plastics in high traffic areas, with a centrally placed, seven-inch infotainment screen easily accessible by both driver and front passenger.

The air-conditioning system offers dual-zone controls; the steering column is adjustable for rake and reach; the steering wheel includes switchgear for the audio system and cruise control; there's Bluetooth with hands-free voice

control; anti-lock brakes; hill-start assist; daytime running lights; speed-sensing automatic door locks; a rear-view camera and a keyless operating system.

Incidentally, braking performance and feel have been improved through the use of larger front discs and calipers, while the ride has been refined by incorporating larger dampers at the rear. Steering is light but accurate.

In all, on the road the refreshed Triton feels nearly as polished as a comfortable SUV and, for a bakkie, its narrower dimensions make it easy to manoeuvre whether in town or when driving off-road. Its diesel engine is capable and easy on fuel, and the model is strong on safety. Additionally, it is well priced, Mitsubishi's spokesmen claiming that the top of the range model is about R25 000 cheaper than its nearest rival.

"The new Triton is engineered to be tough and looks the part," says Campbell. "We are confident that the upgraded version will build on the popularity of the original Triton and the 40 years of development of this iconic pick-up."

All models are covered by Mitsubishi's three-year / 100 000 km warranty, a five-year / 90 000 km service plan and five-year / unlimited mileage Roadside Assistance. Service intervals are every 10 000 km. **F**



control, along with a radio, CD and MP3 player, USB ports and accessory points and, optionally, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto platforms.

Ahead of the gear lever are controls for the 4WD system, which include settings for 2H and 4H, plus 4HLc (4WD high range with the central diff locked) and 4LLc (4WD low range with the central diff locked).

Also selectable are electronic modes for gravel, mud/snow, sand or rock – each designed to deliver optimal performance for the particular surface – and there's a button to lock the rear diff, a useful feature when extreme off-road conditions are encountered.

Another useful tool is a hill-descent control button, which, in the off-road situation, is used to automatically limit the vehicle's speed down steep inclines. It works effectively and reassuringly, judging by its performance on a selection of severe, slippery slopes tackled on the test track.

Safety and convenience features include Mitsubishi's reinforced body construction, dubbed RISE; seven airbags; side impact protection bars; a collapsible steering column; Isofix child-seat anchors; active stability and traction

## PRICING – MITSUBISHI TRITON

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# STYLISH OFF ROADING WITH THE NISSAN NAVARA STEALTH

WITH SIMILAR FEATURES TO THOSE OF THE NISSAN NAVARA LE, IT REALLY IS THE STYLING THAT SETS THE TOP-OF-THE-RANGE NAVARA STEALTH APART. MARISKA MORRIS FINDS OUT IF THE NEW TRIMS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

T

he Navara range is the latest collection of double-cab bakkies on offer from Nissan. Starting at R489 700, the line-up includes 4x2 and 4x4 derivatives in SE, LE or Stealth guise, with automatic gearbox options available for all but entry-level variants.

The most affordable Navara, the SE includes features such as a reverse camera, six-speed manual transmission and a braked towing capacity of 3,5 t. Upgrading to a model in the LE range means even more features – among them hill-start assist, hill-descent control, reverse-parking sensors and roof rails.

The top-of-the-range Navara Stealth doesn't offer more gadgets, instead its appeal lies in its unique styling option. The model is available in three colours – white, black or grey – of which I find the latter best complements the orange accents on the grille, mirrors and side step. Additionally, the flanks and rear of the Stealth incorporate distinctive graphics to further set the model apart.

Door handles, roof rails, bumpers and tailgate handle are black as opposed to traditional silver. The model also features a tubular sports bar to promote its off-road-ready appeal. Inside, orange accents are carried through to the leather-and-fabric combination sports seats and trim.

The Stealth seems to find a good balance between the rugged, off-road appeal favoured by many outdoor bakkie adventurers and the more urbane look that's suited to city night life. It appears to be equally at home in the bush and in the concrete jungle.

So, is the Stealth worth it? Well, that depends. For many buyers, the most important aspects of a vehicle are performance, price and appearance – usually in that order. The Stealth does not compromise on performance;

its turbocharged, four-cylinder, diesel-fed engine – which produces 140 kW – ensures the vehicle has more than enough power.

With the seven-speed auto transmission, the vehicle is always operating in its optimal gear, which translates into good fuel consumption for a vehicle of its size. During my test drive of the Stealth, which took me to Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), fuel economy averaged 7,8 litres per 100 km – this, of course, before any off-roading took place.

The cruise-control feature on the 4x4 automatic model further helps fuel economy and makes travelling longer distances a pleasure. Hill-start assist and hill-descent control were put to the test on a 4x4 route in the Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary.

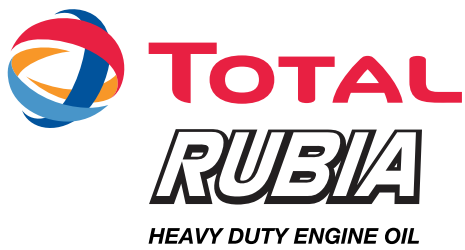
The Stealth climbed even the steepest of hills with minimal effort, while on descents the hill-descent technology kept the vehicle at a slow and steady pace with no braking required – it was simply a matter of pointing the nose in the right direction. This made manoeuvring on difficult, rocky terrain much easier – especially for an amateur.

Despite its size, the Stealth is just as easy to manoeuvre in the city with the sensors and cameras that provide the driver with greater visibility around the vehicle.

I believe the only thing to consider is whether the Stealth's more expensive price tag justifies the unique design. The Navara LE 4x4 automatic's starting price is R650 700, compared with the Stealth's R663 200. Considering this meagre price difference between the Stealth and its peer, it all comes down to taste.

Personally, the pop of orange on the metallic pearl grey, orange stitching on the seats and sports bar make all the difference to the design. With it, one can seamlessly transition between the office, an off-road adventure and city night life. **F**





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# LIQUID FUELS SOON TO BE FOSSILS?

**IN A STUDY INVOLVING HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIOS IN WHICH ELECTRIC VEHICLES ARE WIDELY ADOPTED IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE COUNTRY'S LIQUID-FUEL INDUSTRY FACES AN ALARMING DECLINE. MARISKA MORRIS TAKES A LOOK AT THE RESEARCH**

**N**

umerous economic and environmental factors will make electric vehicles (EVs) part of the future of transport in South Africa. That's the message from Louise Naude, programme manager for low-carbon frameworks at the World Wide Fund (WWF).

Speaking in Johannesburg at a recent Transport Forum event, Naude said government had committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2050. "We know that our economy needs to transition to one that is low carbon and climate resilient," she said. "There is a big appetite for South Africa to be carbon neutral by 2050."

Naude said the transport and automotive industry could contribute significantly to securing the country's carbon-neutral future, since it employed a big portion of the population and contributed substantially to the economy. However, she pointed out that the sector also consumed about 97 percent of liquid fuels and was responsible for 13 percent of South Africa's greenhouse-gas emissions.

She said that although it was inevitable that the automotive manufacturing sector would push the transport industry to adopt cleaner energy alternatives – as more countries that imported locally manufactured vehicles banned internal-combustion engines – the

switch to EVs would have its own repercussions.

Outlining hypothetical scenarios in a study undertaken by the WWF, Naude said the Department of Trade and Industry had recently compiled research to determine the macro-economic impact on the country if there was a mass uptake of EVs. As part of the study, the WWF had looked at the impact the move would have on the liquid-fuel industry – the current driving force for transport in South Africa.

"It's a study of the hypothetical impact caused by a 50-percent drop in demand for liquid fuel by 2042, based on the assumption that EVs will reach some kind of critical mass by that point," she explained, adding that the research focused mainly on a decline in petrol demand from passenger vehicles.

According to Naude, the fuel industry contributed about R324 billion to South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP), making up about eight percent of the total. Further, it provided R90 billion annually to government in revenue and employed around 789 417 people. Therefore, any significant changes in the industry's structure would have a significant impact on the country's economy.

She said the WWF study considered two scenarios and the consequences they would have for the fuel industry,



The first focused on a decline in demand for petrol, with requirements for other fuels such as diesel and aviation fuel remaining constant in line with historical growth rates. The second considered the impact if there was a decline in demand for all liquid fuels.

In each scenario, four of South Africa's six oil refineries would close. The first study showed that a decline in demand for petrol could result in fuel prices becoming more affordable – but at significant cost to the country's economy. First, there would be an estimated 45 000 jobs lost – a big concern since South Africa's unemployment rate currently borders on 30 percent.

Second, government revenue would decline by about R40 billion annually and the GDP would shrink by about R16 billion. Secunda and Natref would be the only refineries in operation. In addition, significant investment would be needed to set up distribution systems to meet revised demand.

"For instance, the existing Transnet pipeline distribution system will need to be geared to allow it to transport fuel out of Secunda and Natref to the rest of the country rather than inwardly as it is currently doing," Naude said. "At the moment it is not geared to run in the opposite direction."

The second scenario portrayed a similar grim situation with government revenue declining by R125 billion, with substantial demand for infrastructural investment and high job losses also on the cards.

Naude said that while the hypothetical scenarios might not directly impact the transport industry, the economic consequences would put a severe strain on the sector. She added that although the liquid-fuels industry was unlikely to avoid the switch to electric for much longer, there were ways in which it could remain profitable even in the face of an increase in the popularity of EVs.

"For a start, refineries can produce cleaner fuel that can be used in Euro-6 engines. This will benefit local transport operators who can then invest in vehicles that produce less harmful emissions. Simultaneously, it will allow refineries to export more fuel," she said.

Naude explained that locally refined fuels had a high sulphur content. "We can't run some of the low-emission engines, like the Euro 6, because the local fuel supply is not up to standard. To do so, South Africa would need to import cleaner fuel.

"Also, by producing fuel that is high in sulphur, we are constraining our export market. Many developed countries won't buy our product, and those that do won't pay top dollar for it," she said.

Naude pointed out that it was possible for South African refineries to be modified to produce higher-grade fuels. "There is no need to build new refineries," she said. "However, massive investment will be required to convert the existing infrastructure – an estimated R40 to R60 billion." **F**



# EXPERT ADVICE FOR SECURING VEHICLE FINANCE

**OBTAINING VEHICLE FINANCE REMAINS A MONUMENTAL HURDLE FOR COMMERCIAL OPERATORS, AND THE CURRENT BLEAK ECONOMIC OUTLOOK IN SOUTH AFRICA IS NOT HELPING. LIANA SHAW INVESTIGATES**

**B**hen asked whether vehicle finance was readily available in the current economic climate, John Loxton, head of fleet management and leasing at WesBank, responded: "I don't think there is one universal response that would cover this question. For start-ups, it remains a very challenging prospect, especially given the current headwinds faced by the industry. For existing operators, the outcome will depend on their most recent financial performance, confirmation of secured contracts, as well as their track record with financial institutions, to a lesser extent."

Dave van Graan, head of special projects for MAN Automotive SA, added: "As in all economic cycles, the appetite to extend credit in economic boom periods is higher than in recessive periods."

He went on to explain that the type and scope of securitising collateral will always depend on the magnitude of the borrowings, coupled to the risk factors associated with those borrowings, and that sometimes

when finance is taken purely for fleet replacement, existing securities are sufficient, whereas finance for expanding operations may require additional collateral. "Every transaction has to be viewed on its own merits," he said.

When asked to outline precisely what financial institutions require by way of collateral, Loxton confirmed this would depend on each individual transaction. "Within the instalment credit market, we typically rely on the asset value. In some instances we do call for deposits, depending on the structure of the transaction," he said.

He added that this was less of a concern within the fleet-management and leasing market, but with the caveat that the financials would support the cash flow and that it falls within a minimum level of affordability.

## **SOUND CONTRACTS A GOOD STARTING POINT**

The best way to go about securing finance, according to WesBank, is for the applicant to provide a sound contract.

Assuming this is in place, final approval would then depend on the contractor's proven track record and historical financial performance.

The owner-operator would then have the choice to approach a bank for finance or the rental of the asset(s), with that financial institution applying various qualifying criteria in order to arrive at an outcome in respect of the application.

According to Van Graan, in the case of an original equipment manufacturer, all that would-be owner-operators need to do is to make contact with one of their financial services business-development managers, who would then walk them through the funding and finance process and the respective options available.

Reiterating the importance of applying for finance with a sound contract, Van Graan said: "Should the owner-operator have access to a long-term contract, and a reasonable financial standing and track record, we will support them in all matters financial.

"Where things become difficult is when an applicant cannot bring basic financial statements, banking records or, most importantly, a clear picture of the total operating costs associated with the planned transport operation," he explained.

As for allegations surrounding lenders charging extremely high rates to higher-risk businesses, coupled with the length of the repayment term, and the suggestion that this could be hampering vehicle sales, Loxton said: "We should

be careful not to subscribe to populist statements without any substance. A relatively high interest rate is normally a function of the risk associated with the transaction. The term of the agreement would have to be accepted by the customer.

"The combination of the two would present the customer with a monthly financial commitment that would be accepted or rejected. Under the auspices of the National Credit Act, in terms of affordability and treating customers fairly, I think customers can rest assured that their interests in any finance agreement are well protected when transacting with a bank. The same cannot necessarily be said of unregulated lenders and it would be irresponsible to respond on their behalf."

These sentiments were echoed by Van Graan: "The rate of the cost of borrowings has always been linked to the credit risk associated to those funds. This is nothing new and applies universally to everyone. As the financial track record of every entity borrowing funds from any bank improves over time, so do the interest rates.

"Working closely with our own business partner, MAN Automotive, we are able to off-set the costs of funding interest through other aspects such as proven fuel efficiency, lower costs of maintenance and guaranteed residuals."

He concluded: "In the end it is about the net costs represented in cents per kilometre which really count for the customer's long-term creditworthiness." **F**

# T M H

## TRANSPORT MANAGER'S HANDBOOK

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**DISCOVER THE INNER TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS WORLD!**

# TURKISH AUTOMOTIVE MARKET CRASHES



**LINKED, IN PART, TO THE "STAGFLATIONARY" STATE OF THE TURKISH ECONOMY, EVERY SEGMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MARKET HAS BEEN CONTRACTING DRASTICALLY OVER THE LAST TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS. JUST HOW BAD ARE THINGS EXPECTED TO GET, AND WHAT ARE THE RIPPLE EFFECTS? LIANA SHAW INVESTIGATES**

## A

n excerpt from a recent article in *IHS Markit*, reported vehicle production in Turkey had plunged 15 percent year on year, according to data from the Turkish Automotive Manufacturers' Association.

Haydar Yenigun, GM at Ford Otosan, explains: "Reaching one-million units was the dream of automotive manufacturers in the domestic market. However, with the rise in foreign currency rates the market dropped from one million to around 640 000 units by the end of 2018. The market is expected to drop to 380 000 to 400 000 units by the end of 2019. The sector compensated the situation somewhat with exports.

"We see nearly a 60-percent decrease in the light commercial vehicle market compared to the June sales average of the last ten years. Looking at ten-year data in the January to December 2008 period, the volume of the light commercial vehicle market was 188 025 units.

"Ten years later, it is down to 134 616 units with a 42.33 percent decrease compared to 2018. In comparison to June 2018, the light commercial vehicle market decreased 32.08 percent to 6 664 units in June 2019. Last year, the sales figure was 9 812 units.

"In the first half of 2019 (January to June), the light

commercial vehicle market decreased 50 percent to 38 766 units, as opposed to 77 478 units for the same period last year," he reveals.

"In the January to March period, the sector exported 320 213 vehicles, 209 884 of which were passenger cars, accounting for 89 percent of total production. That being said, vehicle exports in the January to March 2019 period decreased seven percent compared to the same period of 2018," he adds.

According to Yenigun, the European Union is the country's main export market. "However, the uncertainties there are also giving some signs. In this time of global trade wars, focusing on exports alone comes with some risks. Therefore, it is important to identify which parts vehicle manufacturers may need in the coming period and to have these produced locally.

"Additionally, the uncertainty around Brexit and its potential impacts continues to create unrest for Turkish automotive manufacturers. If the no-deal Brexit scenario occurs on October 31, it could be the beginning of a rough period for the industry and its exports," cautions Yenigun.

According to Ahmet Oguz, publishing editor at *Devir Saati* (a Turkish commercial vehicle publication), the Turkish commercial vehicle market previously ranked among the



top six European markets (Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Turkey and Russia) with respect to unit size of those market segments. "But over the last two decades, our position has begun to shift for the first time, due to one crisis after another.

"For example, up until 2017, the five-year-long annual average size of the Turkish heavy-duty truck market (about 16-t gross vehicle weight) had numbered around 30 000 units. In 2017 and 2018, this market segment was able to achieve only roughly half this figure. More alarming still, that number has shrunk by more than half in the first quarter of this year," he reveals.

Much of this is being blamed on the Turkish currency and debt crisis of 2018, which saw the Turkish lira plunging in value along with high inflation, rising borrowing costs and rising loan defaults.

Says Ford Otosan's Yenigun: "Some of the key reasons behind the contraction in the sector are the rise in vehicle prices, due to high foreign exchange rates, the increase in consumer loan rates and the decline in the economic confidence index. When you add the difficulties of accessing finance, the market experienced a significant shrinkage. We also see a significant decline in the domestic fleet market, due to the postponement of purchasing decisions until after the elections and financing problems."

To counter some of these ill-effects on industry, the Turkish government announced a reduction in taxes levied

and challenges in accessing loans, the impact of these incentives was limited.

"We believe that similar to home loans, low-interest, no-limit loans with longer maturities should be made available for the automotive industry to overcome this problem. In addition, we advocate the introduction of a purchasing finance support programme to support heavy commercial vehicles."

Oguz says that, from time to time, government has introduced such campaigns, with some proving more successful than others. "And sometimes, a similar or perhaps the same type of campaign that proved successful before might not achieve the same level of success. Let's face it, no company would choose to bet the sale of its products and subsequent growth solely on these campaigns.

"The popular Turkish saying, 'one cannot live without hope' holds true here. Something needs to be done to help the market climb out of its present slump. I cannot say when the market is expected to recover, but I am confident that in time it will," says Oguz.

Ford Otosan's Yenigun concurs: "Bear in mind that commercial vehicle production in Turkey is at a very advanced level, both in the main and supply industries – something which is demonstrated in the country's high export performance. Turkey currently produces 50 percent of the commercial vehicles sold in the European Union. And Ford Otosan, in particular, leads the way, accounting for 74 percent of the country's total commercial vehicle production and exports.

"Thankfully, at Ford Otosan, our engineering experience in the heavy commercial sector, coupled with our deep-rooted heritage spanning 60 years, meant we were able to close 2018 with 28,5 percent share in the heavy commercial vehicle market and maintained our traditional leadership in road trucks with more than 50-percent share.

"In construction, our steady rise in recent years was crowned with segment leadership of 39 percent, while in the tractor segment, our market share of 8,8 percent in 2017 rose to 15,6 percent in 2018, marking an important step. Ongoing investment in research and development, together with product investment in the last decade, enabled us to more than double our market share from 2008 to date."

The good news is that Yenigun does see a light at the end of this tunnel. "We anticipate that the heavy commercial market will capture its former pace with the recovery of other industries and, in particular, the construction sector. With the economic uncertainties drawing to an end, we believe that the domestic market will recover gradually from 2020 onwards, depending on the political and economic conjuncture," he concludes. **F**

on new automotive sales (March through June), in the hope of sparking a recovery in domestic sales.

"The government's decisions on SCT and VAT reductions provided vital support to the sector, triggering some recovery in the market and halting the contraction," confirms Yenigun.

"However, the real problem was the sharp rise in vehicle prices, which was brought about by the spikes in foreign currency rates. Given the increase in consumer loan rates



# THE ENGINE FROM



# THE EXPERT CHINA

Located in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, FAW Jiefang Automotive Co., Ltd. Wuxi Diesel Engine Works (hereinafter referred to as "FAWDE") is an exclusively-invested enterprise subordinated to China FAW Group Corporation. Established in 1943, and after seven decades of development, the factory now covers an area of 670,000 square meters, with over 3,500 employees, total assets of RMB6.35 billion, and brand intangible assets of RMB10.229 billion. Presently, it possesses four plant areas, including two large engine bases, one engine remanufacturing base, and one modified vehicle research base, and has formed a production system with world-leading equipment, domestic leading management and industry leading quality, with an annual production capacity of 600,000 diesel engines and 15,000 modified vehicles.



FAWDE GENERATOR ENGINE								
Model	4DW	4DX	4DF	6DF	6DL1	6DL2	6DM2	
Bore*Stroke mm	4- 85*100	4- 90*100	4- 102*118	4- 110*125	6- 110*125	6- 112*135	6- 112*145	6- 123*145
Displacement (L)	2.27	2.54	3.86	4.75	7.13	7.7	8.6	11.05
Standby power/speed (Kw/rpm)	19/1500	23-34/1500	36-53/1500	72-92/1500	105-154/1500	194/1500	226-251/1500	316-330/1500
Prime power/speed (Kw/rpm)	19/1500	21-31/1500	33-48/1500	65-84/1500	96-140/1500	178/1500	205-227/1500	287-300/1500
Available range	Generator: 15KVA-375KVA							

## GENERATOR SETS

FAWDE diesel engines reliably drive a comprehensive set of power generators available for a wide range of business and industrial uses, ranging from 15KVA-375KVA.

FAWDE ENGINE									
Model	4DW	4DX	4DF	6DF	6DL1	6DL2	6DM2	6DM3	
Bore*Stroke mm	4- 85*100	4- 90*100	4- 102*118	4- 110*125	6- 110*125	6- 112*135	6- 112*145	6- 123*145	6- 126.5*166
Displacement (L)	2.27	2.54	3.86	4.75	7.13	7.7	8.6	11.05	12.52
Rated net power/speed (Kw/rpm)	17-33/1500-2650	22-55/1500-2650	40-74/1500-2400	65-118/1500-2300	92-177/1500-2400	147-195/1500-2100	182-235/1500-2200	228-309/1500-2000	300-338/1500-1900
Maximum torque/speed (N·m/rpm)	145/1500-0-1800	245/1500-1800	380/1500-0-1800	540/1400-1700	880/1400-1700	1100/1500-1800	1400/1500-1800	2100/1300-1600	2300/1300-1500
Available range	Trucks, Generator, Water pump, Forklift, Loader, Harvester etc.								

## FAW TRUCKS

The economy and reliability of our world-renowned FAWDE diesel engines is the driving force behind the success of the comprehensive range of FAW trucks.

# GLOBAL FOCUS NEWS

## IVECO LAUNCHES S-WAY

The long-awaited successor to the Stralis, the S-Way, has been launched in Europe.

The new S-Way features a new cab boasting a driver-centric design. It is said to provide first-rate living and working conditions with a spacious environment, outstanding driving ergonomics, and a well-planned layout that combines functionality with comfort. The design also addresses driver safety with a reinforced structure and much-improved visibility all around and in all conditions.

The new design optimises aerodynamic performance, further increasing the vehicle's excellent fuel efficiency by up to four percent. Also contributing to a low total cost of ownership (TCO) are design features such as the multi-piece bumper that dramatically reduces repair costs, as only the affected part needs to be replaced in the event of damage.

The design of the new cab was guided by the needs of the driver, starting with the ideal driving position. The base of the adjustable seat was lowered in order to increase both cushion thickness and stroke range, providing all drivers with a comfortable position and optimal visibility. The steering wheel is shaped with a flat base, which is terrific for truck drivers with a so-called beer boep (beer belly, in case you don't speak Afrikaans).

The ergonomic layout of the controls ensures all

the key functions are within easy reach of the driver, making it easy to operate the vehicle comfortably and efficiently.

The multi-functional steering wheel, with 22 switches, puts all the necessary functions, including the Assisted Driving Systems, at the driver's fingertips. This set-up eliminates distractions for drivers, who are able to operate without ever needing to move their hands from the steering wheel, increasing their safety and comfort.

Connectivity is a highlight of the new truck; the new, advanced Connectivity Box in the Iveco S-Way is said to be a powerful connectivity enabler and true game-changer. It collects, processes and exchanges data in real time. It works off a service platform developed in partnership with Microsoft that provides safe data storage and management, and many value-added services. Owners and drivers are constantly connected with the vehicle on their mobile device or PC through the user-friendly MyIVECO portal and app.

The S-Way uses connectivity to enhance the driver's life on board, providing a superior driving experience with advanced driver-assistance and driving-style features combined with services developed to help them operate effortlessly and efficiently, accessed through the user-friendly MyIVECO EASY Way App.

The engines and transmissions are unchanged. The S-Way should come to South Africa in about 2021.

## SPRINTER IS BEST LARGE VAN

The ever-popular Mercedes-Benz Sprinter has scooped yet another award: Large Van of the Year by *Company Van Today*.

"The Mercedes-Benz Sprinter has long been the king of the large-van segment, and the new model has only accelerated that position thanks to new levels technology and quality," says *Company Van Today* editor Tom Webster. "The Sprinter sets a high standard, is a desirable and capable vehicle available with a variety of options that will suit any customer use, and has a reputation for durability that is the envy of the industry."

The *Company Van Today* Awards reward the best vehicles in the industry – those light commercials that offer fleets a combination of great running costs, high quality, efficiency and clever features that help businesses do their jobs.

Carefully selected by a *Company Van Today*

editorial team, who have decades of combined experience in the sector, the winners are those that can best serve a business audience.





## ORDERS GALORE FOR ALL-ELECTRIC MAN ETGE

Customers in Europe love the all-electric MAN eTGE! Austrian transportation and logistics company Quehenberger Logistics has recently started using three MAN eTGEs in its operations, while 11 eTGEs have been handed over to the Swiss national postal service.

Quehenberger has also been running an all-electric MAN eTGM distribution truck since the third quarter of 2018. The eTGEs will be used wherever quiet, emission-free logistics are needed (especially in situations where the company's three-axle, 26-t MAN e-truck is too big or heavy to be used).

Christian Fürstaller, CEO and managing partner of Quehenberger Logistics, is a big fan of e-mobility and he points out that the battery-powered vans offer one other crucial advantage: "E-mobility enables us to reduce the amount of traffic at peak times, as it allows us to shift the delivery slots to overnight and early-morning periods," he notes.

Apart from the tyre rolling noise, the electric vans really are virtually silent when on the move, which means it is possible to start deliveries very early in the morning. Quehenberger starts deliveries to customers located in Salzburg's inner-city area



## PACCAR DELIVERS RECORD RESULTS

Paccar – owner of DAF, Peterbilt and Kenworth – has just announced record quarterly revenues and excellent net income for the second quarter of 2019. According to Preston Feight, chief executive officer, the results come off the back of robust global truck demand, record Paccar truck production and record global aftermarket parts sales.

"I am very proud of our employees who have delivered outstanding trucks, powertrains and transportation solutions to our customers. Peterbilt and Kenworth 2019 production schedules are substantially full. Customers are ordering trucks for delivery in the first half of 2020," he reveals.

Paccar earned net income of US\$ 619.7 million (about R8.8 billion) in the second quarter, 11-percent

higher than the US\$ 559.6 million (about R7.9 billion) earned in the same period last year.

As revealed in our interview with Harry Wolters, DAF president, earlier this year, the truck maker is on a real roll. In fact, it achieved an excellent 16.7-percent market share in the European above 16-t segment in the first half of 2019.

"Customers are benefiting from the reliability and fuel-efficiency leadership of the DAF XF, CF and LF trucks. We have increased our estimate of European truck industry registrations in the above 16-t market to be in a range of 300 000 to 320 000 vehicles this year," says Wolters.

It's a real pity that we don't see more of these marvellous trucks on South Africa's roads...

as early as 04:30 – far earlier than other delivery vehicles or rush-hour traffic, and all without waking up local residents.

The charging infrastructure for all of Quehenberger's electric commercial vehicles is located in Bergheim site, around ten minutes from Salzburg. This is where the vans and truck start their daily trips. This site features a 22 kW charging station, which combines Mennekes AMMAX high-voltage sockets for the eTGEs and a Mennekes AMTRON wallbox for the eTGM.

Meanwhile, across the border in Switzerland,

11 MAN eTGEs are busily delivering packages in Ostermundigen, Geneva and St. Gallen. These vans will prevent around 40 t of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from being released into the atmosphere each year.

Due to the wide array of advantages offered by electric vehicles, which the postal service already uses for letter deliveries, it is looking to expand its use of electric vehicles into the parcel-delivery business – initially in the big cities, then later to more spread-out destinations. By 2023, Swiss Post intends to have up to 400 electric-powered vans delivering packages.

## DRIVERLESS PARKING IS HERE

Bosch and Daimler have reached a milestone on the way to automated driving: the two companies have now obtained approval from the relevant authorities in Baden-Württemberg for their automated parking system in the Mercedes-Benz Museum parking garage in Stuttgart.

The automated valet parking service is accessed via a smartphone app and requires no safety driver. This makes it the world's first fully automated driverless SAE Level 4 parking function to be officially approved for everyday use.


It's ever so easy to use. The regular driver enters the garage, gets out and sends the car to a parking space just by tapping on a smartphone screen. Once the driver has left the parking garage to go about their business, the



car drives itself to an assigned space and parks. Later, the car returns to the drop-off point in exactly the same way.

As someone who truly hates alley docking trucks, I sincerely hope that we will see trucks parking themselves like this one day!



 @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.

# SHORT HAULS

## FAW HARRISMITH BECOMES FULL SALES AND SERVICE DEALER

FAW Harrismith, which opened in March this year, is now a full FAW sales and service branch and part of the growing FAW South Africa dealer network.

The Free State facility was previously independent, selling FAW vehicles as well as a number of passenger cars and bakkies. FAW South Africa, however, decided to purchase the dealership outright and then invested considerably in its renewal and repurposing.

FAW Harrismith recently sold its first new truck since reopening – a FAW 6.130FL 3,5 t with drop-side body – to an existing FAW client who is the proud owner of a 15.180FL, bought in 2015.

The customer's business is located in Tshiame, an industrial area just a few kilometres out of town on the N5 towards Bethlehem, where it manufactures steel silos and then installs them on farms, both locally and in some neighbouring countries. The FAW 6.130FL 3,5 t is the perfect alternative to a bakkie and trailer, which is sometimes used to get the company's work done.

FAW Harrismith is located on the main transport route between Johannesburg and Durban on the N3 and is also within close proximity to the N5, which makes the facility a strategic service point for the FAW brand.

"A lot of FAWs were – and continue to be – sold in Harrismith," says FAW Harrismith branch manager, Louis de la Rouvière. "We have had numerous enquiries already about new trucks to both new and existing



customers, and the word is spreading that we are now an FAW dealership."

Besides selling new trucks, FAW Harrismith boasts a complete sales and service operation for fleet and truck owners. "There is a need for truck servicing, repairs and parts to complement our newly revamped workshop," says De la Rouvière. He adds that the current staff complement of seven will soon expand to nine or even ten as demands dictates.

The revamped dealership looks after FAW customers from the Villiers toll gate all the way to the toll plaza at Van Reenen's Pass, after which the region is served by FAW Pinetown.

Global logistics congress set for Cape Town

## eACTROS UNDERGOES GERMAN TESTS

A battery-electric Mercedes-Benz eActros is being put to the test in daily operations by a German transport company. The 25-t vehicle, operated by Logistik Schmitt, travels between a warehouse in Ötigheim, southern Germany, and Mercedes-Benz's Gaggenau plant in Rastatt, a distance of about seven kilometres.

The vehicle is used in place of a conventionally powered truck to transport transmission housings,



covering about 168 km daily as part of a demanding, three-shift operation. The truck is said to have a range of 200 km on a single charge.

Stefan Buchner, head of Mercedes-Benz Trucks, says the eActros has now been integrated in daily operations by test customers not only in Germany, but in Switzerland, too, where an eActros has covered thousands of test kilometres. "Even fully loaded and regardless of hot or cold temperatures, it successfully completes its daily duties. This spurs us on in our aim to enable local emission-free distribution with heavy-duty, series-produced trucks from 2021 onwards," he says.

Rainer Schmitt, spokesman for Logistik Schmitt, says the company's tests show that the eActros is well suited for the distribution operation. "The truck is reliable, always ready for duty and its range easily meets our route requirements."



## TATA BOLSTERS ITS ULTRA TRUCK RANGE

The Tata Ultra, built on the core philosophy to provide the best value for money offering to the customer, is a result of extensive feedback from customers and is specifically engineered for the South African market.

"Since its introduction, the Tata Ultra – dubbed the business utility vehicle – has been well received in the South African market. The positive response has encouraged us to launch the Ultra Plus 1418 at Ultra 814 AMT at this month's Futuroad Expo to enhance the vehicle's platform offerings. Be it large fleet operators, captive users, fleet rental companies or logistics companies, the Tata Ultra has an ideal solution for all," says Harneet Luther, executive director at Tata Automobile Corporation SA.

The Ultra platform is engineered to be extremely versatile, boasting three deck lengths and three wheelbases with payloads ranging from four- to eight-tonnes. The platform also has a wider track and cab, which enables bodies with a width of up to 2,5 m – ideal for voluminous goods and giving the truck 15 to 20 percent better volume capability in its segment.

"This premium benefit offered in a seven to eight-tonne vehicle is being provided in a value-for-money offering, representing a massive advantage to the operator through enhanced profitability," adds Luther.

Superior performance is guaranteed by a reliable and efficient next-generation common-rail engine offered in two configurations, 3,0-litre 103 kW (140 HP) or 5,0-litre 134 kW (180 HP), paired with either a manual or automatic six-speed gearbox.

Three-way adjustable suspended seats, parabolic leaf suspension, HVAC as standard, a walk-through cabin and a dash-mounted gear lever are some of the key features provided in the Ultra to ensure higher driver productivity and better fleet utilisation.

The vehicle also offers superior manoeuvrability with the lowest turning circle radius in its class even with its longer wheelbase and wider track, making it ideal for last-mile operations.

The Ultra is also equipped with full airbrakes, tubeless radial tyres and halogen headlamps. Furthermore, the vehicle meets ECER-29 crash-test standards. Luther says: "The Ultra has an electronic battery cut-off switch inside cabin to prevent truck jacking. This is a very

important for South Africa. The batteries are also locked away to prevent theft."

He adds that the Ultra is sold with a two-year/120 000 km service plan and a two-year/unlimited kilometre warranty. Combined with 91 touchpoints across South Africa, 24-hour towing and roadside assistance and nationwide parts availability – with 97 percent same-day availability on Top 500 parts – the vehicle is designed to provide complete peace of mind to the operator.

Maintenance is also extremely easy thanks to prop-shaft joints that are sealed for life and rubber bushes that eliminate the need for repeated greasing, while a hydraulically tilted cab offers technicians excellent accessibility.

"Tata is bullish on South Africa," says Luther. "We have a range of world-class offerings to address the specific



requirements of the market. We have many customers whose Tata trucks have exceeded a million kilometres in South Africa – and one whose vehicle has done over 4,2-million kilometres. That is the kind of ruggedness and reliability we build into our trucks. We are confident that, down the years, we will have similar success stories with the Tata Ultra. We have carried over the same genes and improved on them through extensive engineering."

He says the Ultra is designed to ensure the best-bang-for-the-buck for a South African operator with perfect integration of versatility, performance, comfort, style and safety. "We are not branding the Ultra as a truck, but as a business utility vehicle (BUV) as we are offering premium utility-vehicle-like interiors on a functional and versatile load carrier," he says.

## NEW DEFENDER PUT THROUGH ITS PACES

Land Rover's new Defender has been put through its paces under the watchful eye of all-terrain experts from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in the latest stage of its global testing programme. The prototype vehicle recently visited the IFRC global fleet base at Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, ahead of its public debut later this year.

Land Rover engineers demonstrated the Defender's on- and off-road capabilities before the IFRC's fleet experts took to the wheel to test the vehicle for themselves on the region's desert sand dunes and the twisty tarmac of Jebel Jais highway.



The test in Dubai coincided with the renewal of Land Rover's global partnership with the IFRC – a relationship that dates back 65 years, to 1954, when the first specially adapted Land Rover entered service in the region as a mobile dispensary.

This year marks the humanitarian organisation's centenary as it celebrates 100 Years of Hope. Over the next three years, Land Rover will support disaster preparedness and response initiatives in locations including India, Mexico and Australia.

Ilr Caushaj, the IFRC's Team Lead for Global Fleets and Logistics, said: "The Red Cross supports millions of people in crisis every year, working in almost every country in the world. We operate in some of the most hard-to-reach places on earth, often working in very difficult terrain, so our teams have to be able to cope with anything. That's why we're proud to have partnered with Land Rover since 1954, and to be putting their new Defender to the test, as together they help us reach vulnerable communities in crisis, whoever and wherever in the world they are."

The IFRC fleet experts tested the Defender in soft sand among the rolling dunes of the desert, where the prototype model shrugged off the steep ascents, demanding side slopes and blind crests.

## STATE OF THE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MARKET, JULY 2019

The National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA) reported that sales of new light commercial vehicles vehicle sales grew by 391 units – up 2.9 percent – compared with the figure for July last year. Sales in the medium and heavy-vehicle segments also reflected gains, an improvement of 14.9 percent in the case of medium commercials and 21.4 percent in the case of heavy trucks and buses, compared with figures for the corresponding month last year.

Light Commercial Vehicles < 3 501 kg	Total: 13 852
Changan	19
Fiat Chrysler Automobiles South Africa	17
Ford Motor Company	2 266
GWM	188
Hyundai Automotive SA	235
Isuzu Motors South Africa	1 723
JMC	18
Kia South Africa	204
Mahindra	337
Mazda South Africa	26
Mercedes-Benz SA	113
Mitsubishi	33
Nissan	3 065
Opel	32
Renault	14
Suzuki Auto	93
Toyota	5 008
Volkswagen SA	461

Medium Commercial Vehicles 3 501 – 8 500 kg	Total: 801
FAW	7
Ford Motor Company	4
Hino	134
Hyundai Automotive SA	20
Isuzu Motors South Africa	160
Iveco	86
JMC	8
Mercedes-Benz SA	168
Peugeot Citroën South Africa	5
Powerstar	2
Tata	39
Toyota	100
Volkswagen SA	68

Heavy Commercial Vehicles 8 501 – 16 500 kg	Total: 538
FAW	47
Hino	125
Isuzu Motors South Africa	130
Iveco	2
MAN Automotive	13
Mercedes-Benz SA	47
Powerstar	7
Tata	47
UD	100
VECV (Eicher)	20

Extra-Heavy Commercial Vehicles > 16 500 kg	Total: 1 308
Babcock DAF	24
Daewoo	13
FAW	66
Hino	36
Isuzu Motors South Africa	16
Iveco	16
MAN Automotive	154
Mercedes-Benz SA	251
Powerstar	27
Scania	242
Tata	8
UD	122
VECV (Eicher)	1
Volkswagen SA	3
Volvo Group Southern Africa	329

Buses > 8 500 kg	Total: 101
Iveco	20
MAN Automotive	35
Mercedes-Benz SA	13
Scania	13
Tata	3
Volkswagen SA	10
Volvo Group Southern Africa	7

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.



# GETTING EXCITED AS SCANIA OFFERS MORE

**SCANIA SOUTHERN AFRICA HAS BIG PLANS FOR ITS BUS AND COACH DIVISION HEADING INTO 2020. CUSTOMERS GOT A TASTE OF WHAT IS TO COME AT THE 2019 SOUTHERN AFRICAN BUS OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (SABOA) CONFERENCE**

**T**he annual Saboa Conference returned to the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Convention Centre in Pretoria where Scania Southern Africa was front and centre with a beautifully streamlined stand, which offered ample seating – a pointer to the purpose of the brand's presence at the conference.

"Scania returns to Saboa each year to make sure our clients know we are here for them. We use the opportunity to get a better idea of what our customers need so that we can differentiate our service offering," said Alan Hugo, GM of Bus and Coach at Scania Southern Africa.

Hugo emphasised that his team's priority was to communicate with customers regarding transport challenges and offer effective solutions aligned to their needs as quickly as possible. This focus on client satisfaction is largely what sparks Hugo's passion for the Scania brand.

"My mentor always said that it's not a matter of selling vehicles. It is a matter of understanding the client's requirements and differentiating the service offerings and products to benefit them. This is one of the reasons I'm passionate about the company at which I work," he explained.

"Scania takes a lot of pride in doing just that. We're not a supplier; we are a successful transport solutions provider. We offer the whole spectrum of value adds to the customer – from insurance, finance and contracts to outstanding products and connectivity. We try to offer a unique solution tailored to specific customer requirements."

It is this client-centred approach that has inspired some of the new developments from Scania – the first of which was showcased at the Saboa Conference.

"Traditionally, Scania ran only a manual gearbox on its six-foot F310 6x2 chassis. Now, we have replaced it with Opticruise transmission, which is an automated manual gearbox. Once again, it comes down to understanding the needs of the operators," Hugo noted.

"Scania customers have been requesting a solution that offers improved safety, better fuel consumption and better ergonomics. The Opticruise gearbox – which is similar to units used in Scania coaches – provides the answers.

"It operates in the optimal rev band, which provides the best possible torque. It is tried and tested as far as fuel consumption is concerned, returning very good figures. And, from an operational perspective, it is also more convenient for drivers to use," he said.

According to Hugo, this ideal solution for Scania customers is just one of many new product and service offerings that the Swedish original equipment manufacturer has planned for the industry in the coming year. A key focal point for Scania Southern Africa is to expand its market mix to increase volumes in particular sectors.

"We are also going to be expanding our product range in the months heading into 2020. We'll be looking at introducing a 36-seater 4x2 coach chassis for touring, a 4x2 chassis with Opticruise and a F360 chassis with disc brakes and Opticruise," he said, adding that the F360 would be equipped with a higher displacement, 13-litre engine that offers better torque and more horsepower.

"With the new F310 and F360, I think we will make a significant impact in cross-border and intercity operations," Hugo noted.

It is sure to be an exciting year for Scania Southern Africa and its clients in the bus industry. **F**



# ALL THINGS BUS AND LEGISLATION

**THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN BUS INDUSTRY GATHERED FOR THE 2019 SOUTHERN AFRICAN BUS OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (SABOA) CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION TO GET EXPERT INPUT ON THE CHALLENGES FACING THE INDUSTRY. MARISKA MORRIS ATTENDED**

**B**us operators, government, academia, telematics companies and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) gathered at the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Convention Centre in Pretoria on July 31 and August 1 for the annual Saboa Conference and Exhibition. Each year, the event gives the industry the opportunity to network and address some of the challenges facing bus operators.

Some of the key presentations at the 2019 conference included feedback from the Competition Commission on its market inquiry, updates to the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (Aarto) demerit point system and changes to the Draft White Paper on National Transport Policy.

Itumeleng Lesofe, principal analyst of market conduct at the Competition Commission of South Africa, started the first day of the conference by sharing the preliminary findings of the Public Passenger Transport Market Inquiry. At the time of the conference, the report was still incomplete.

Lesofe explained that the bus industry is a priority for the Competition Commission: "The poor spend a significant proportion of their income on public transport, which is exacerbated by apartheid spatial planning." The inquiry looked at interprovincial bus services, bus contracting and integrated rapid public-transport network (IRPTN) or bus rapid transport (BRT) systems.

With interprovincial bus services, the Competition Commission found that Autopax had a competitive advantage. Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) was found to favour the bus operator by, for example, not actively pursuing Autopax for outstanding debt, providing bailouts and supplying the bus operator with a dedicated loading area.

While Lesofe didn't share the recommendations on how to prevent this preferential treatment, he did warn that this limited other operators and it could result in an inefficient bus operator remaining in business. The inquiry also found that the interprovincial bus operators abuse the objection proceedings to delay or discourage new operators from entering the market.

It also highlighted the fact that the provincial regulatory entities had inadequate capacity and resources, which has made obtaining an operating licence a tedious and expensive exercise for new entrants and small operators in the interprovincial sector.

With the bus contracting procedures, the Competition Commission found that subsidies were disproportionately allocated between the various provinces and between urban and rural operators within the same province. When subsidies are allocated, the additional high costs incurred by bus operators in rural areas are not considered. As a result, these operators struggle, even with subsidies.

Finally, the commission found that in their current format BRT systems are inefficient and have escalating costs, low ridership and a lack of capacity. While all these issues do require serious government intervention to ensure equal opportunities and competition, Lesofe noted that change will be slow.

"Changes in the sector might require a more gradual rather than a swift response. Rapid changes could, in fact, have a negative impact such as job losses and a loss of income. Yet, we do want small and medium bus operators in the market, as this creates more competition, which results in improved efficiency," he concluded.

Themba Tenza, chief director of research and development at the Department of Transport (DoT), shared updates to the Draft White Paper on National Transport Policy, which

includes setting a standard or benchmark for public-transport infrastructure and stricter roadside testing.

Thabo Tsholetsane, Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA) COO and member of the Aarto Task Team, discussed the changes to the demerit point system. Among several other amendments, RTIA introduced electronic services, which will allow it to contact individuals electronically and reduce operating costs.

There is also no distinction made for major or minor infringements. Tsholetsane explained: "Reference is now made to infringement for all types of contraventions, except for the ones that are classified as offences." The RTIA will also introduce a traffic rehabilitation process to help infringers change their behaviour.

Aside from the technical presentations on legislation, delegates also gained some insight into what the future



of public transport and the bus industry might look like. Ibou Diouf, programme manager of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme (SSATP) at the World Bank, for example, discussed the role of public transport in the sustainable urban development in Africa.

The SSATP is a unique, international partnership to facilitate policy development and related capacity building in the transport sector in Africa.

Diouf introduced the topic by stating: "We remember the importance of public transport only when it fails." Mass transport will play a critical role in an increasingly urbanised Africa, but only if governments can provide public-transport systems that are efficient and comfortable.

According to Diouf, Africa has one of the highest rates of urbanisation in the world, which is combined with poor urban design, insufficient or poor road networks and weak public-transport policies. This leads to informal public transport, such as minibus taxis, poor road conditions, road safety concerns, congestion, pollution and ill-optimised investments.

"The total cost as a result of these impacts on the economy is estimated at two to four percent of a country's gross domestic product (GDP)," Diouf explained. There is thus an incredible need to address the mobility in African cities. The most effective way to address these challenges is by implementing effective public-transport systems.

Diouf said: "Simply building more roads will only lead to

more private vehicles, which will fill up the roads again." He explained that an integrated approach is key to addressing public transport and mobility in Africa. However, this will require adequate institutional set-up, data collection, proper skills, planning, good project management, substantial funding, private-sector development and engagement with civil society.



In addition to presentations from experts within the industry, the exhibition at the Saboa Conference included everything from tyres and vehicles to financial services and telematics. On display outside the conference centre were the MCV 600 with bull bar, the Marcopolo Torino, Iveco Stabus with wheelchair ramp and the new MAN Lion City double-deck bus.

In recent years, MAN has always presented something new at Saboa. As Phillip Kalil-Zackey, head of sales and products in the bus division at MAN South Africa, noted: "The Saboa Conference is the ideal place at which to do this."

Alan Hugo, GM of Bus and Coach at the Scania Group, agreed with Kalil-Zackey's sentiment, noting that the conference provides great networking opportunities.

"It really is a good forum. There are a lot of operators with whom to engage. It also allows product and service providers to see what the other OEMs are up to, so that they can differentiate their product offering. The bus industry is a relatively small sector, but a very tight-knit community," Hugo said. **F**

# ECOLIFE: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR BUSES

**ECOLIFE, ZF'S FUEL-SAVING AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION FOR BUSES, WAS A BIG HIT AT THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN BUS OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (SABOA) CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION. POPULAR IN EUROPE AS WELL AS MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES, THE GEARBOX IS SAID TO OFFER SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS IN TERMS OF ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

One of the biggest challenges associated with buses in congested urban areas is the fact that they have to make lots of short stops to allow passengers on or off. With engines idling, they pump out exhaust gases that, over time, help to rob cities of breathable air.

To combat the scourge, ZF developed its EcoLife transmission for city and intercity bus and coach applications. Introduced ten years ago in Europe as successor to the popular EcoMat gearbox, the six-speed auto transmission incorporates a host of features designed to improve fuel consumption and reduce emissions, offering substantial environmental benefits.

Fully stop/start capable – which means no more engine idling at bus stops – and with TopoDyn Life shift software ensuring that the optimum gear is always selected, the transmission is said to offer significant economic advantages in terms of fuel-saving, service life, maintenance and comfort, while also contributing to lower air pollution and noise levels.

Suitable for use in all types of buses powered by engines conforming to Euro-3 specifications and up, the gearbox operates within a torque range of between 650 Nm and 2 300 Nm, providing original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and end customers with options regarding the applications for which it can be used – midibus, city, intercity or coach.

ZF's representatives say the unit offers fuel savings of up to 20 percent compared with traditional manual gearboxes, and up to ten percent compared with other automatic transmissions.

A hydrodynamic torque converter with standard turbine torsional damper enables high input torque at low engine speeds. "This helps to cut fuel consumption by up to five percent compared with automatic transmissions with fewer than six gears. It also reduces the level of noise made by the transmission," says a spokesman.

Top stopping power is guaranteed thanks to an integrated primary retarder that supports high braking capacity even at low engine speeds, reducing strain on the vehicle's wheel brakes and prolonging their service life. Additionally, a dual cooling system, which includes a heat exchanger on the retarder, reliably protects against overheating and helps to extend oil-change intervals.

"The powershift transmission has an optimal gear-ratio spread combined with especially high mechanical efficiency. The torque converter lock-up clutch closes



**ABOVE:** ZF's representatives with the EcoLife gearbox at the Saboa Conference, from left: Thomas Gessler, senior manager, commercial vehicle technology sales; Erik Snowdon, technical executive for customer service and quality; and Andreas Brück, manager of OEM/OES sales and applications

shortly after pull-off to use engine power effectively, with TopoDyn Life shift software optimising shift strategy, even taking into account the topography over which the bus is travelling to reduce fuel consumption," says the spokesman. "As the nature of the road changes, the programme always selects the right gear, while also taking into account all other driving resistance values."

He adds that ZF sees big potential for the gearbox in buses built on truck chassis. "In this respect, we are involved in a homologation process with a number of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) in Europe. Also, Chinese manufacturers have begun to incorporate the EcoLife in a variety of buses built on truck chassis."

In Africa, he says the gearbox is popular in countries to the north. Markets include Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Namibia. "The transmission is well-adapted for hot countries thanks to its dual cooling system. Transport operators in Africa have recognised this fact – some have coaches equipped with EcoLife gearboxes that have travelled more than 1.4-million kilometres and are still running trouble-free."

With ZF having an established authorised service partner network across Africa – the southern African operation is headquartered in Johannesburg, with subsidiaries in Cape Town, Durban, Windhoek and Nelspruit – customer support is well taken care of, with mobile field service technicians available on call.

"ZF Services South Africa has a large stock holding of parts that cover all of our product ranges. In other African markets we also have good availability of spares," the spokesman says. **F**



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