

FleetWatch

EMag Vol 78 / 2021

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**TRUCKING
WELLNESS**
The Trucking
Stars of
Covid-19

Special Report
**LEST WE
FORGET**
Trucking's week
of hell on earth

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▲ The satellite Covid-19 vaccination site set up at the Super Group in collaboration with Trucking Wellness and the Ekurhuleni Department of Health proved to be an ideal partnership. It kicked off Trucking Wellness' wider entry into the vaccination arena.

▼ Super Group truck driver Chrys Letsoale from SG Freight in Richards Bay. "I have not been able to get my vaccine anywhere and now I have it. I am happy."

The Trucking Stars of Covid-19

If there is one organisation in our industry that deserves its praises to be shouted from the highest mountain for its perseverance in joining the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, it is Trucking Wellness, an initiative of the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry (NBCRFLI). Against incredible odds and huge stumbling blocks, this organisation, under the leadership of Tertius Wessels, has from the very first Covid positive case recorded in South Africa, thrown its weight behind helping not only the trucking sector but indeed, all South Africans to win the war against Covid-19. Patrick O'Leary charts the journey.



The involvement of Trucking Wellness in helping in the fight against Covid-19 has been a long time coming. In fact, it goes back to March 30, 2020 when President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a massive Covid-19 testing drive whereby 10 000 community health care workers would be deployed across the country to conduct door to door screening in South Africa's most vulnerable communities.

The scientists at that time were urging governments throughout the world to test, test and to keep testing. It was in line with this global call that the South African government bought 67 vans to be deployed across the country as screening and test centres. This was announced as a joint initiative between the National Health Laboratory Service in partnership with the National Department of Health.

With the country then being locked down solidly under Level 5, Trucking Wellness found that its mobile clinics were not being used and decided to offer them to the Department of Health to help in the testing drive – at no charge at all. The 21 Trucking Wellness clinics were also offered as test venues – again at no cost. Letters

from both Trucking Wellness as well as from *FleetWatch* were sent to the Department of Health outlining this offer but there was no response.

FleetWatch then contacted the spokesperson for the Department of Health who asked for an email to be sent. The email was sent – along with one from Trucking Wellness - but again no response was received. When *FleetWatch* visited one of the screening centres set up in Hartbeespoort, we again put out a message that Trucking Wellness was there and willing to help the national effort. Although coming from *FleetWatch*, the call had the full backing of Trucking Wellness and the NBCRFLI. We were working in partnership to get action. Click on this link to hear the message. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7dk1YgKwIM>

'The contribution Trucking Wellness could make in saving lives overrode any hidden feelings of 'they're not interested, so to heck with it.'

Alas, again there was no response. By this time, one would have thought that Trucking Wellness would give up. But no, Tertius Wessels was determined. Trucking Wellness had the mobile clinics, the 21 truckstop clinics, the staff and over 20 years' experience in dealing with health issues in the trucking industry. The contribution Trucking Wellness could make in saving lives overrode any hidden feelings of 'they're not interested so to heck with it'. Certainly it was extremely frustrating but he was not going to give up. The rebuttals of silence to all offers did not serve to build a wall that could not be scaled.

The next step was to go around the corners instead of direct to the National Department of Health. Brian Baloyi, a good friend of *FleetWatch* and former Bafana-Bafana goal-keeper, had contacts in the Gauteng Department of Health and this great man arranged a meeting between himself, Themba Mthombeni, Operations Director for Trucking Wellness, and an official from the DoH. The meeting was held but again, nothing tangible resulted from it. Thanks Brian for trying. You're a Super Star.

An action lady who had gained the respect of the nation for the great work she was doing in the

► 6



▲ Thrilled at the success of the project held at Super Group are, from left: Stephanie Fourie, Super Group marketing manager; Peter Mountford, Super Group CEO; Tertius Wessels, MD of Trucking Wellness; and John Mackay, company secretary for the Super Group.

► Happy to be helping in the national vaccine roll-out are Trucking Wellness staffers Thadekile Nkosi (left) and Sister Dudu Zondo.





WATCH THE VIDEOS



**Annah Mabunda, Assistant manager,
Clinical Forensic Medical Services**



**Themba Mthombeni, Operations
Director Trucking Wellness**



**Sister Thembisile Zamias
Ekurhuleni District, Department of
Health**

**Getting in the
game... the
drive-through
vaccination site
at Bonaero Park
where Trucking
Wellness staff
assisted.**



▲ The Truck Man, Don Vale, bares his arm for his first Pfizer jab!



▲ Eager for the job, John Wolff of Wolff Autohaus.

► The fight against Covid-19 was Professor Glenda Grey, who had been appointed to the government's Medical Advisory Committee. FleetWatch contacted her and a Zoom meeting was arranged with Tertius Wessels. Professor Grey was most accommodating and we have no doubt that she would have tried to take it further. Unfortunately, though, she left her post soon after so, once again, the offers fell into the deep canyon of Government indifference.

Fast forward through the various levels of lockdown – and controversies - to February 2nd, 2021 when the first batch of Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccines arrived at OR Tambo airport from India. The drive for national testing was still on but the urgency to get the population vaccinated was now a priority.

Once again, Trucking Wellness offered its clinics and services – this time to administer vaccines - but again, no response was received. And bear in mind that as Trucking Wellness had, for months, been trying to offer an honest and ethical service, reports were emerging almost daily of the Covid-19 arena being riddled with corruption and malpractice in the purchase and supply of personal protective equipment (PPE). The very people tasked with protecting the people were being exposed for profiteering from the pandemic. Disgusting!

Big breakthrough

The breakthrough came when the NBCRFLI linked Wessels up to Terrence Magoro and his team at the Ekurhuleni Department of Health. It is here that Annah Mabunda, assistant manager of a programme called Clinical Forensic Medical Services which falls under the Ekurhuleni DoH came into the picture. Being on the ground in the fight against Covid-19, she realised that collaborating with Trucking Wellness could result in huge benefits and the link was established. Since then, the relationship has grown from strength to strength and to this day, Mabunda continues to ensure that all protocols and standards are adhered to and met.

The first collaboration exercise was conducted at a drive-through vaccination facility set up by the Ekurhuleni DoH in Bonaero Park where Trucking Wellness helped by making available some of its staff and a vaccination station to help get as many people as possible vaccinated. This was the opening up of vaccinations for the over 60s – the first group after health workers. This drive-through wasn't directed solely at the trucking industry but was open to all people over 60 years of age.

Throughout this time, truck drivers had been in the front-line as essential workers – especially during Level 5 lockdown when they kept the goods flowing to the stores. And yet neither the truck drivers – nor the industry itself – had been prioritised for vaccines seeing that they were a high risk sector. While this was recognised by Trucking Wellness with disappointment, it did not deter them from wanting to throw their resources behind the national efforts for the good of all South Africans. And this drive-through station was the first manifestation of that desire in action.

Having walked the bumpy road with Trucking Wellness, there was no way I was going anywhere else but Trucking Wellness for my first vaccination. By this time, the Pfizer vaccine had been sourced. I thus went along on one of the days with my wife and invited Don Vale of The Truck Man as well as John Wolff of Wolff Autohaus and his wife to join us. It was our way of supporting and acknowledging the efforts of Trucking Wellness. It was a celebration of persistence.

It was here that we met Annah Mabunda and what an angel she proved to be. Themba Mthombeni, Operations Director for Trucking Wellness was also there and we met up with Sister Thembisile Zamias of the Ekurhuleni district who was running the show. I urge readers to listen to the three videos featured on page 6 to capture the true commitment and total passion of these people. Mabunda, told us they were thrilled to be working with Trucking Wellness and looked

forward to forging even closer ties of co-operation over the long term. Mthombeni also warmly welcomed the link with the Ekurhuleni DoH and said they wanted similar co-operation to be extended to all provinces around the country.

What all the staff working there on the day served to do was reignite a belief in the goodness of Mr & Mrs Average South African. There were no politicians here; no podium grand-standing; no desire to enrich rather than to serve. Even an Eskom power outage which took the system down couldn't deter them. Not wanting to disappoint the people who had arrived to be vaccinated, the staff then used their own cell phones and their own data to tap into the central data base to extract the required information so that no-one would go away disappointed. I will never forget those people.

Working with Mabunda and the Ekurhuleni DoH, Trucking Wellness nursing staff were then sent on training courses and accreditation was obtained in terms of meeting all the protocols and criteria required

as an authorised vaccination provider. This also enabled Trucking Wellness to access vaccines as a separate entity via the Ekurhuleni DoH.

The next step was to target the larger companies operating in the trucking and logistics arena which, of course, is the prime target market for Trucking Wellness. Enter the Super Group.

Enter the Super Group

After looking in vain for a number of sources to conduct Covid-19 vaccinations for his staff, Peter Mountford, Group CEO of Super Group, hit jackpot when he heard that Trucking Wellness had, with the full support of the Ekurhuleni Department of Health, been gearing itself up to conduct on site vaccinations for companies involved in the trucking sector.

"We as an organisation had over time educated our staff on all aspects of the Covid-19 virus through videos and various other forms of communication. However, the last phase was the vaccination process and here is where we ▶ 8

"We can't look at politics. We have to look at practicalities."

Peter Mountford
Chief Executive Officer, Super Group



Trucking Wellness vaccinates

▲ Truck driver Mxolisi Henry Masilele from MacDonald's Transport popped in at the R2I site for his vaccine administered here by Trucking Wellness' Sister Ntombifuthi Madonsela.



R21 POP-UP

Some 380 truck drivers popped into the Engen 1-Stop to get vaccinated.



▲ Truck drivers registering to get their Covid-19 vaccination jabs.



▲ Jacob Mamabolo, Gauteng MEC for Roads and Transport expressed his full support for getting truck drivers vaccinated.



▲ Gavin Kelly, CEO of the Road Freight Association, supporting the collaboration of all parties.



◀ The man behind the Trucking Wellness Vaccination Drive... Tertius Wessels (left) seen here with Terrence Magoro, Chief Director, Ekurhuleni Health District who has totally supported the collaboration between Ekurhuleni DoH and Trucking Wellness.

► 7 were battling,” says Mountford, adding that it was proving to be a struggle for many in terms of registering and finding out where and when to go – and then actually getting to the vaccination site.

“We saw the ideal solution as being to bring the vaccines to our environment making it more convenient, safer and easier for all our staff and even their families.” Bear in mind that it wasn’t just drivers that they were looking to cater for. It was all staff, from administration, warehouse, dealers and even families of staff.

Having approached a number of organisations without success, Trucking Wellness came to mind and this proved the ideal solution. “They had the expertise, the trained nurses and access to the vaccines through their association with the Ekurhuleni Department of Health and we had the people that needed to be vaccinated. It was an ideal partnership,” said Mountford.

He added that it was not only the ability to conduct the exercise that impressed, but also the total willingness of Tertius Wessels and Annah Mabunda to go out of their way to make it happen. “They bent over backwards and deserve the highest praise. We were looking for a solution and they delivered it.”

It was thus that a satellite base was set up at Super City as a pilot project embarked on as a partnership between Trucking Wellness, the Ekurhuleni Department of Health and the ► 10



▲ Musa Ndlovu, national secretary of the NBCRFLI under which Trucking Wellness falls was there to give his support.

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Vice President: Customer Services, Parts and Downstream

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► **8 Super Group.** I must point out that the 'pilot project' was more to gauge the abilities of Trucking Wellness to meet all the correct protocols in terms of an independent Covid-19 vaccination station. The good news is that over the seven days that this site operated, it met all protocols 100 percent. It was a resounding success with 1 540 people being vaccinated.

FleetWatch visited the site at Super Group on one of the days to witness how it was all playing out. A round-table discussion between CEO Peter Mountford, John Mackay, Group company secretary, marketing manager Stephanie Fourie, Tertius Wessels and myself on the day left me feeling both elated and disappointed; elated at the total success that arises from co-operative ventures and disappointed that, as pointed out earlier in this story, it had taken so long to get to this point.

The discussion around that table was all so positive; it was all the right stuff. If only national government would stand good on its often-made calls for partnerships, a lot more would get done – not only in terms of Covid-19 actions but in terms of so many challenges facing the country.

I think here of the hassles at border posts where congestion sees truck drivers standing in long queues for days at a time. The private sector is willing and able to work with the relevant government departments to get processes and systems permanently in place to ensure the trucks and the goods flow but apart from the constant push and shove from an organisation like FESARTA, there isn't a concerted effort from government to link hands with the private sector on a permanent basis. The end result is that when the 'push and shove' is implemented, the congestion is eased – but only for a while before it goes back to the kilometre long queues.

Good things do happen

What happened at the Super Group, serves to prove that when a genuine, open and honest

partnership venture between a Government department and the private sector is embarked on, good things happen. This was about serving South Africa and its people with no political gains or self vested interests coming into play. As Mountford said: "We can't look at politics. We have to look at practicalities." In fact, had it not been for Annah Mabunda and the Ekurhuleni DoH linking hands with Trucking Wellness, even this event might not have happened.

Talking to the people down at the vaccination site, there was nothing but



▲ Big salute to a sterling organisation Trucking Wellness.

a positive vibe running throughout. Everything was in place, including a paramedic on site to ensure immediate attention should anyone have had an adverse reaction to the vaccine. And no-one did. Everyone was happy. It was working well.

Once again, having walked a long road with Trucking Wellness and determined to stick with the trucking industry, I took the opportunity to get my second jab. Truck driver Chrys Letsoale from SG Freight in Richards Bay and I went through the process together and had some great laughs with the friendly nursing staff. He was thrilled at being able to get his vaccination. "I have not been able to get it anywhere and now I have it. I am happy," he said.

Thanks to the Super Group pilot project, this set the stage for other projects with Trucking Wellness now extending its Covid-19 vaccination services to other transport companies including

Bollore branches in Pomona and Jetpark where 200 people were vaccinated; RTT in Jetpark (380); Imperial Logistics in Alberton (507); and Namlog in Benoni (180) - to mention but a few.

A big event was later held on the R21 at the Engen Highveld I-Stop West as an initiative between Trucking Wellness, the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry, the Road Freight Association, Engen, the Gauteng Department of Transport and the Ekurhuleni Department of Health. For five days, a pop-up

vaccination centre was held here specifically geared to cater for truck drivers. This too was a success with over 380 passing truck drivers popping in to get their vaccination. Since then there have been other venues such as at the Engen truck stop in Beaufort West.

The road Trucking Wellness has walked reminds me of how Trucking Against AIDS started way back as Trucking Against AIDS. It was the age of HIV/AIDS denialism but it took one

man in Government, then Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj, to see through the clouds and work with *FleetWatch* and the private trucking sector to tackle the scourge of HIV/AIDS by getting Trucking Against AIDS up and running. Today Trucking Wellness falls under the banner of the National Bargaining Council for the Road Freight and Logistics Industry (NBCRFLI) and stands proudly as a world-leading organisation in the service it provides to the trucking sector and surrounding communities.

In this case, it took one lady in Government, Annah Mabunda of the Ekurhuleni Department of Health to see through the clouds and work with Tertius Wessels and Trucking Wellness to tackle the scourge of Covid-19. This sets an example of true government/private sector partnerships. They work and are totally devoid of controversies. This is what South Africa needs more of. □



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THE OPENING SALVO TO A WEEK OF HELL

▲ This burnt car carrier saw a number of BMW cars destroyed

It was at the Mooi River toll plaza on the evening of July 9th that the main fuse was lit for the raging flames that spread and engulfed KwaZulu-Natal and parts of Gauteng during the unrest in July following the imprisonment of former President Jacob Zuma. Yes, there had been a number of protests during the day where the N2 and N3 were blocked with burning tyres but those were mere precursors. The curtain to the main event was raised at Mooi River – and it turned into a week-long horror show of riots, burning, killing, looting, destruction, criminality and total mayhem. But it was the trucking industry that took the initial brunt writes *Patrick O’Leary*.



WATCH
THE VIDEO



Mayhem at Mooi River

LEST WE FORGET

The call came in quite early on the evening of Friday July 9th. “They’re burning trucks at Mooi River”. *FleetWatch* immediately started phoning our various contacts. Please let it not be a repeat of 2018. But alas, it was. At 20h45, *FleetWatch* posted the first warning alert on our Facebook page. It read: “Truckers avoid N3 Mooi River. Tyres burning everywhere and one truck set alight on the southbound lane near the Mooi River exit. AVOID. Keep your trucks away.”

At 22h30 we put out another urgent warning which read: “This is an urgent call to all transporters whose trucks are heading towards Mooi River – either south or north bound. Get your trucks off the road. Eight trucks have now been burnt so far in the vicinity of Mooi River on the N3. There is a small police presence in the area and reinforcements are being waited for from Pietermaritzburg. Mooi River is now an EXTREMELY HIGH RISK AREA with residents from the Bruntville community alongside Mooi River looting trucks and going mad.

“Latest news received is that one of the trucks on the northbound lane is carrying methyl ethyl ketone which emits poisonous fumes when burning. This could be a huge disaster for the whole area. I have just spoken to a resident of Mooi River who lives about 1 km from the N3. He says it is like a war zone down on the N3 with huge explosions from tyres bursting rattling their windows. Just park your trucks. Don’t go further than Ladysmith or Pietermaritzburg. Get all trucks off the road.”

Although we were doing our best to get the message out, trucks were still arriving in the area. I picked up this message from one of the security companies in the area: “We cannot protect these trucks and if they keep coming, I am not prepared to risk my staff’s lives for people who won’t listen.”

At 23h45 I then sent out a video summing up the situation again urging all truckers to park their trucks. The video can be seen ► 14



A WAR ZONE

► 13 here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=782fGLEkZis>.

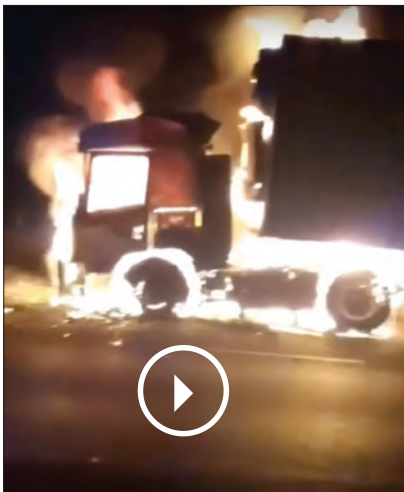
Unfortunately, the warnings did not get through to everyone with the result that come the morning, the area looked like a war-zone. No less than 25 trucks and trailers were burnt, one being a car carrier which lost a number of new BMW cars destroyed by fire. The sad remnants of truck carcasses were all that remained and the tow truckers were hard at work trying to remove the burnt 'carcasses' and get the N3 open again.

This was the opening salvo to a week of hell for South Africa. The accompanying videos and photographs were sourced from various social media posts as well as supplied directly to *FleetWatch* by people who were on the scene. The videos show the active 'war zone' while the photographs give readers an idea of the total destruction that resulted from the madness.

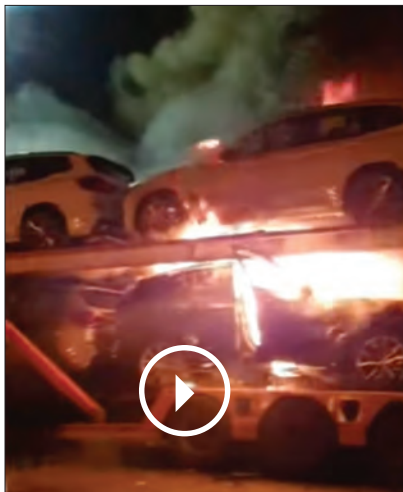
From our information sources, although the drivers were highly traumatised, no driver was killed or injured thank goodness. However, many millions of Rands of assets – the wheels of the economy - went up in flames, destroyed in a frenzy of madness. And for what purpose? □



**WATCH
THE VIDEOS**



**Looting and destruction of trucks:
Mooi River July 9th, 2021**



**Burning of Car Carrier with new
BMW's: Mooi River July 9th, 2021**



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A TRUCKER'S HELL

It was a heart-breaking conversation. The time was just after midnight on July 14th and as we were talking on the phone, criminals who had stormed into the premises of Texas Trucking in Durban were continuing to break into and steal goods from containers, steal batteries from the trucks and siphon fuel from the fuel tanks. No trucks had yet been set alight. That would come later. And there was nothing Neil Gounden, Director of Texas Trucking, could do about it

– except watch his company being destroyed from a safe distance.

It had started at around 09h00 the previous day when around 10 criminals broke into the premises and started looting. Gounden called the SAPS who arrived and were able to disperse the small group. However, they came back later – in droves – and as we were talking, Gounden estimated there to be over 100 people going crazy in his depot.

“The Metro police are outside but they can’t do anything. There are too many people,” he told me just before ending the call as he had his security company ringing through.

I caught up with him a few days later and the losses were huge. The looters – at times over 200 of them – had been in his depot from July 13th through to July 15th – three days of hell. And indeed, while on the first day the trucks had not been burnt, by the 15th, 10 vehicles had been burnt to ashes. In addition,



LEST WE FORGET

42 vehicles had been seriously damaged and 100 containers had been looted.

"At one stage we tried to block the entrance with one of our trucks to prevent them entering but they burnt that truck as well," he said, adding that the looters had driven another truck through one of the walls.

Because of the fact that the unrest was widespread, the company had decided that the pre-loaded trailers be parked off 'safely' in the depot until the general 'unrest' quietened down. Given the situation on the streets – and the fact that some 25 trucks had been burnt at Mooi River a few nights previously – it was a sensible decision at the time. However, no-one imagined that the 'unrest' would find its way through the doors of the depots. So with pre-loaded trailers, there was a lot to loot.

And it wasn't just about stealing. What the criminals could not take, they destroyed, including the drivers' change rooms and toilets. The geysers and copper piping were gone though. The inside of the truck cabs were a mess with the tachographs stolen. "They must have thought the tachographs were radios, so they took them," said Gounden. Each tachograph costs around R15 000. All the IT equipment, the tracking equipment was gone; even the hoses on the fire reels were gone. And a car of one of the drivers was stolen.

The actions of the criminals were totally ruthless, brutal and cruel. Not satisfied with siphoning fuel from the fuel tanks, they punctured the tanks as well. The curtains on the curtainsiders – those that weren't burnt – had been cut and destroyed. And why bash the toilets to smithereens? The insanity of mob destruction had reached Texas Trucking. □ (Pictures supplied)



The insanity of mob destruction

Three days of looting hell at Texas Trucking depot saw 10 vehicles burnt to ashes, 42 vehicles seriously damaged and 100 containers looted. What they could not steal, they destroyed... toilets, slashed curtainsiders and more...



AT TIMES MY MIND JUST CAN'T COPE



"I treated them like my babies. I've tried hard not to let it get to me but there are times when my mind just can't cope. It's heart breaking and I'm now trying to pick up a trillion pieces of emotions."

The pictures of devastation – along with the video accompanying this article – will give an idea of the cause of the heartache experienced by Sunesh Manilal, CEO of transport company Suntrans. His 'babies' had been killed, burnt to death by marauding criminals.

This was not a company which



LEST WE FORGET

came easily into Manilal's hands. He didn't inherit it or use the proceeds from a massive Lotto win to buy an existing company. No, it was one he had built up over 23 years from scratch. When he started out, he drove the trucks, he maintained the trucks, he looked after them. They truly were his babies. As the fleet family grew, he could no longer pay as much personal attention to each rig as he did in the beginning. Instead, he got others to do that thereby creating employment. But he still knew every one of them intimately. And now, they were just mounds of ashes - 20 truck tractors and 25 trailers destroyed.

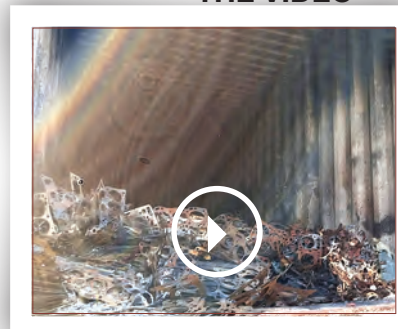
Those that were not burnt were vandalised, the inside of the cabs smashed to bits with crowbars. The containers loaded with goods for export and import were broken into, looted and burnt. A total of 25 containers were burnt "These are the tools of our trade so we can't operate. We're not able to function," said Manilal. And that's not all. The criminals vandalised the offices, the workshops, and either smashed or stole the equipment as well as all consumables.

There were between 200 to 300 looters and criminals operating from early in the morning of August 14th until the early afternoon – and it was organised. "The looters came on foot but there were commercial vehicles involved as the looted goods were loaded onto trucks and hauled away. So there was support." This tallies with other transporters *FleetWatch* spoke to who also saw looted goods being loaded onto trucks and taken away. There were reports from other areas of criminals stealing trucks, driving them to warehouses that were being looted and using them to haul away the stolen goods.

Although the staff and drivers of Suntrans initially tried to defend the property, they had no chance. "I was afraid they would get injured because these people were running amok and I thus told all my staff to leave the premises. It was the right decision and I'm pleased to say that not one staff member was injured. The SAPS also had no chance. It was ► 20



 **WATCH THE VIDEO**



Burnt and destroyed

20 truck tractors
25 trailers
25 containers

11

It may be going a bit too far but perhaps rename the company Suntrans Phoenix. This is not a reference to the suburb of Phoenix but rather to the bird associated with Greek mythology. In this mythology, the Phoenix is a long-lived, immortal bird that cyclically regenerates or is born again. Associated with the sun, a Phoenix obtains new life by arising from the ashes of its predecessor. Thus SunTrans Phoenix. But, maybe not given the controversy around the happenings during the unrest in the suburb of Phoenix. Whatever – just rise up from the ashes so that the Sun can once again shine on your transport business. ☐

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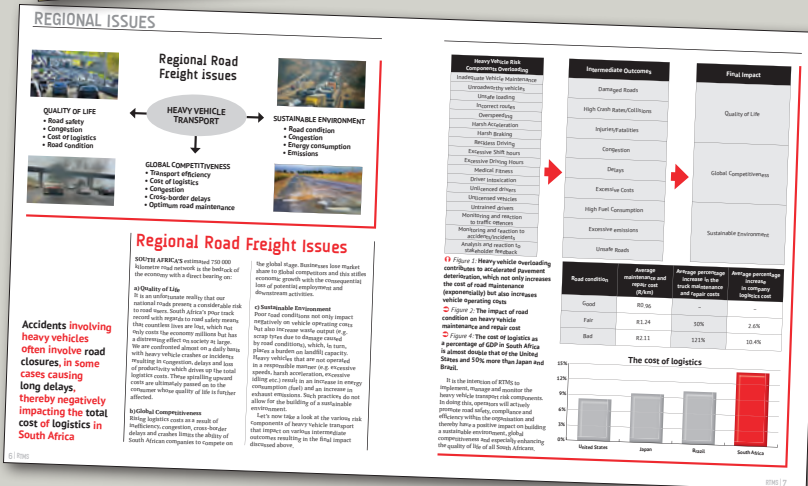
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A COMPANY DESTROYED...



"Every time I went to my yard and saw my burnt-out trailers being cut up by the towing companies, it broke my heart."

Mahen Singh
MD, Zululand Trucking

MY WIFE AND I started this business and have put in years of hard work to build it up. We never expected this to happen to us. It is heart-breaking."

These are the words of Mahen Singh, managing director of Zululand Trucking, whose company was totally destroyed during the unrest that took place in KwaZulu-Natal. Out of 16 truck tractors that were parked in the yard on July 12th, all but five were burnt to ashes. But that wasn't all – 19 trailers were also set alight and destroyed. A number of containers had also been broken into, the goods stolen and were left burning.

Like many companies, Singh had full loads on his rigs and seeing the spread of the unrest, had decided to park off the trucks in the yard until things died down. He never expected the criminals and looters to move off the streets into his yard. But they did.

It was the evening of July 12th when he got notification on his telematics systems that trucks were being disconnected. He logged onto the surveillance cameras and was shocked at what he saw. "There must have been 300 to 400 looters in the yard and they were destroying and looting everything around them," Singh recalls.

There were 16 trucks parked with fully loaded containers on trailers and the first thing the criminals did was to break into the containers. ► 24



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LEST WE FORGET

►22 “We had locks on some of the containers that the supplier said could never be broken. But they broke them and got in.” One of the containers had a full load of Jameson whiskey.

Not content with just stealing the goods, the criminals then vindictively set the back row of trucks – six of them – alight before leaving. That was around 10.30pm. Then, at 02.00am, the mob returned to continue their dastardly deeds. More containers were broken into and the front row of trucks was then set alight.

“They also drove two trucks out of the yard which we were able to later recover but they were badly damaged – the tyres had been cut and the fuel tanks punctured,” says Singh, adding that throughout this time, the police had been called but told him it was beyond their control. They never arrived.

In addition to the rigs, the offices had been broken into and all the computers stolen. And what they couldn’t take, they burnt. The store-room was also broken into and expensive parts such as spare gearboxes, tyres, cylinder heads and lots more were stolen.

The end result was that Singh was left with his company smouldering in a pile of ashes with only five of his 16 rigs not totally destroyed. “I don’t have a yard anymore as the buildings and even the gates were destroyed. My friend next to me is letting me use space in his yard until I can find a place again,” says Singh, adding that his neighbour’s company also had 15 of his trucks burnt by the criminals.

He estimates his total losses to be around the R45-million mark and although claims have been put through to his insurers, he is not sure when he will be paid out to enable him to replace his fleet. Some of the trucks were also on financial arrangements and on this point, he says the bank has been accommodating by giving the company a three month payment grace period to get back to normal.

This has been welcomed by Singh



WATCH THE VIDEO



Total destruction

who says that a few years ago, one of his trucks was burnt in a riot on route to the platinum mines. In that case, SASRIA took six months to pay the claim and the bank gave no leeway. “This time they have seen our predicament and have given us a payment grace period.”

“The problem is that we don’t know how long it will take SASRIA to pay our claims, although our broker has estimated it to be about three months,” said Singh.



LEST WE FORGET

Editor's Note: A statement received from SASRIA stated that on small claims, Sasria's agent companies have been hard at work, settling and paying claims up to R1-million. The problem here is that a trailer will come in under R1-million but a truck tractor will certainly not fall into that category so there will be a longer wait on the big ticket items.

In the meantime, Singh is going all out to keep his customers happy and is doing so by sub-contracting work to other operators. "Customers don't normally allow us to sub-contract but in this case, they are backing us fully and for this we are very appreciative," he says.

The problem, of course, is that the subcontractors have to be paid so while it keeps the customers happy, Zululand Trucking is taking a financial beating with only four of the previous total 16 rigs operating. The other problem, he says, is that he has been trying to buy new trucks to replace the destroyed ones "but there are no trucks available. It's a perfect storm," he says.

The one saving grace is that truck-tractor which he had dedicated to his young son by having a decal of the Marvel Avengers sketched boldly onto the cab, was one of the four which survived – although it

too incurred damage. The truck dedicated to his young daughter, however, was destroyed. It had a sketch of the Titans on the cab. "When the new trucks finally arrive, I will do something special for her," he said sadly.

What I find amazing about Mahen Singh is that even after seeing his life's work burnt to ashes within the short space of 12 hours, he is determined to rebuild. "Maybe I won't go back to 16 trucks. Maybe I'll reduce the fleet size to say 10 but one thing is for sure, we will rebuild this company."

It's all so sad. It's all so horrible. □

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LEST WE FORGET

I've been running this business for 32 years and have never experienced anything like this. My legs have been chopped from under me. It will take me at least two years to recover to the position where I was."

This was a statement from Sun Moodley, CEO of Big Foot Express Freight, speaking to FleetWatch a few days after criminals and looters invaded his company's Westmead premises. Not only did they burn one of his trucks but also his workshops, along with all the equipment; punctured his 24 000 litre depot fuel storage tank; stole batteries from trucks; siphoned fuel from the trucks and punctured the fuel tanks; burnt one his staff's cars; damaged two of the company pool cars; and stole a huge amount from the warehouse, which was completely ransacked.

"What was their mandate? It wasn't just to loot. It was to destroy," said an emotional Moodley as he described the total devastation that the criminals left in their wake. "Why? People in

THEIR MANDATE WAS NOT JUST TO LOOT BUT TO DESTROY

this area know this business. They know we have created employment. Why destroy all this? Why go all out to kill our business?"

At the time of his company being hit, Moodley tried to call in more security staff but it was to no avail. There were just too many to them – between 200 to 300. "It was impossible to bring the situation under control," he said.

Losses from the warehouse were huge as a lot of goods had arrived over the weekend. Some goods were also still in the trailers which the looters offloaded and stole. "They took what they wanted and threw the empty boxes on the floor," said Moodley.

At the time of our discussion, his immediate problem was to replace the keys of the trucks that had not been damaged. The looters had taken all the keys. "I've been trying to get spare keys and it is a big problem. ▶ 28





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In 32 years I have never experienced anything like this... It will take at least two years to recover.

Sun Moodley, CEO

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Big Foot Express Freight premises burning



► 26 Isuzu uses DSV for their deliveries which is not operating due to the unrest and Volvo could only find one replacement key. However, that key has to be programmed which needs a reader and we can't get a reader." There's a lesson here for OEMs.

Total losses had not yet been accurately established but Moodley estimated it at being between R30-million to R40-million. Despite the huge setback, Moodley, like other transporters, was concerned about his customers and getting their goods to their destinations on time.

Among other goods, Big Foot Express Freight hauls a host of general cargo for the manufacture of finished products. As is well known, today's manufacturing plants work on the Just-in-Time method where good are no longer held in warehouses but are rather delivered to the point of manufacture on a Just-in-Time basis. This does not allow for delays as the delays will filter all the way down the line. It is thus that at the time of us talking, Moodley was going all out to ensure the supply chain from his side continued to function as best as it could given the circumstances.

Within four days after the destruction of his premises, he already had trucks collecting and doing long haul trips for their customers. Given that the criminals had stolen most of the keys for his trucks that were not burnt, he also hired some trucks in to ensure continuity of supply. "I cannot let our customers down because in some instances, we are their only transporter and they rely on us."

This says a lot for the resilience of transporters. While walking among the ashes of their own businesses, transporters like Moodley were finding ways to continue servicing their customers. If ever there was an instance which stands as solid testimony to the dedication and passion of this industry to keep the wheels of the economy moving, this example is it.

FleetWatch wishes Big Foot Express Freight all the best in the rebuilding of your business. May you grow in strength as you put this horrible time behind you. □



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DESTRUCTION

FROM THE JOY OF CELEBRATION TO THE HORROR OF DESTRUCTION

On the evening of May 1st, 2021, Steven Gottschalk, CEO of Value Logistics sat at home thinking back on 40 years of contribution to the South Africa economy and the 4 500 people employed by the company. It had been a wonderful day celebrating the company's 40th anniversary and he ended the day a proud and contented man. Just over two months later – on the evening of July 13th, 2021 - the same man sat at home waiting anxiously for a call to confirm or deny that Value Logistics' Cato Ridge warehouse in KwaZulu-Natal had been set alight by 'protestors'. His pride that shone on the 40th anniversary was replaced by a hollow feeling of trepidation and fear writes Patrick O'Leary.

While thousands of looters and criminals were rampaging through shopping centres, large chain stores, small shops, large shops – all shops – taking whatever they could lay their hands on, warehouses in the supply chain were also being attacked. The entire supply chain was being broken and destroyed in the mad frenzy of chaos and criminality that followed the imprisonment of former president Jacob Zuma in July.

The Value Logistics' Cato Ridge hub is a major contributor to KZN's socio-economic wellbeing. The facility not only stores goods but is the hub that transports goods to and from other provinces for distribution in KwaZulu-Natal. Goods from overseas arriving in containers are also re-routed to other provinces in South Africa

LEST WE FORGET

via the hub. Hundreds of tons of product flow through this facility daily making it a vital link in South Africa's supply chain.

IT STARTED on the morning of Monday July 12th when a couple of hundred 'protestors' marched onto the premises of the Value Logistics warehouse in Cato Ridge and started looting and burning trucks. Although there was a police presence as well as security, the 'protestors' taunted them rather than feared them. "Shoot me. Shoot me," one of them shouted at the cops.

It continued through the day, throughout the night and into the next day and it was on Tuesday July 13th, that *FleetWatch* picked up a note that the Value Logistics warehouse was being burnt and that staff were being held hostage. Not wanting to spread fake news, I immediately phoned Steven Gottschalk, the CEO of Value Logistics, to ask if this was true. He did not know and said he would come back to me. Earlier in the afternoon, a Value Logistics horse and trailer had been burnt and destroyed on the road leading up to the warehouse. He later returned the call and as it turned out, it was not true – but the news was not good.

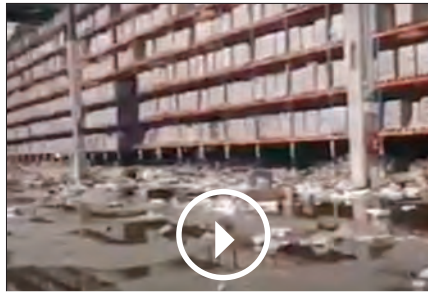
The warehouse had not been burnt but the looting had intensified by the invaders with goods being stolen from the warehouse and loaded into cars and taxis parked in the yard. "There is nothing we can do. There are too many of them," said Gottschalk. "And what they will do afterwards is unknown. So the warehouse is not on fire - YET!"

Later that evening, Gottschalk emailed me a letter he had written for his staff and customers. Here's what he wrote:

"It is 20h30 Tuesday night, and I have just started this letter to you. My phone rings, and I am informed that the Cato Depot may be on fire. So I stopped the letter, as I had to wait to find out if the depot was on fire so I could inform you in my communication. Value Management in Durban are checking out the validity if it is a fire at the Cato warehouse or not. ► 32



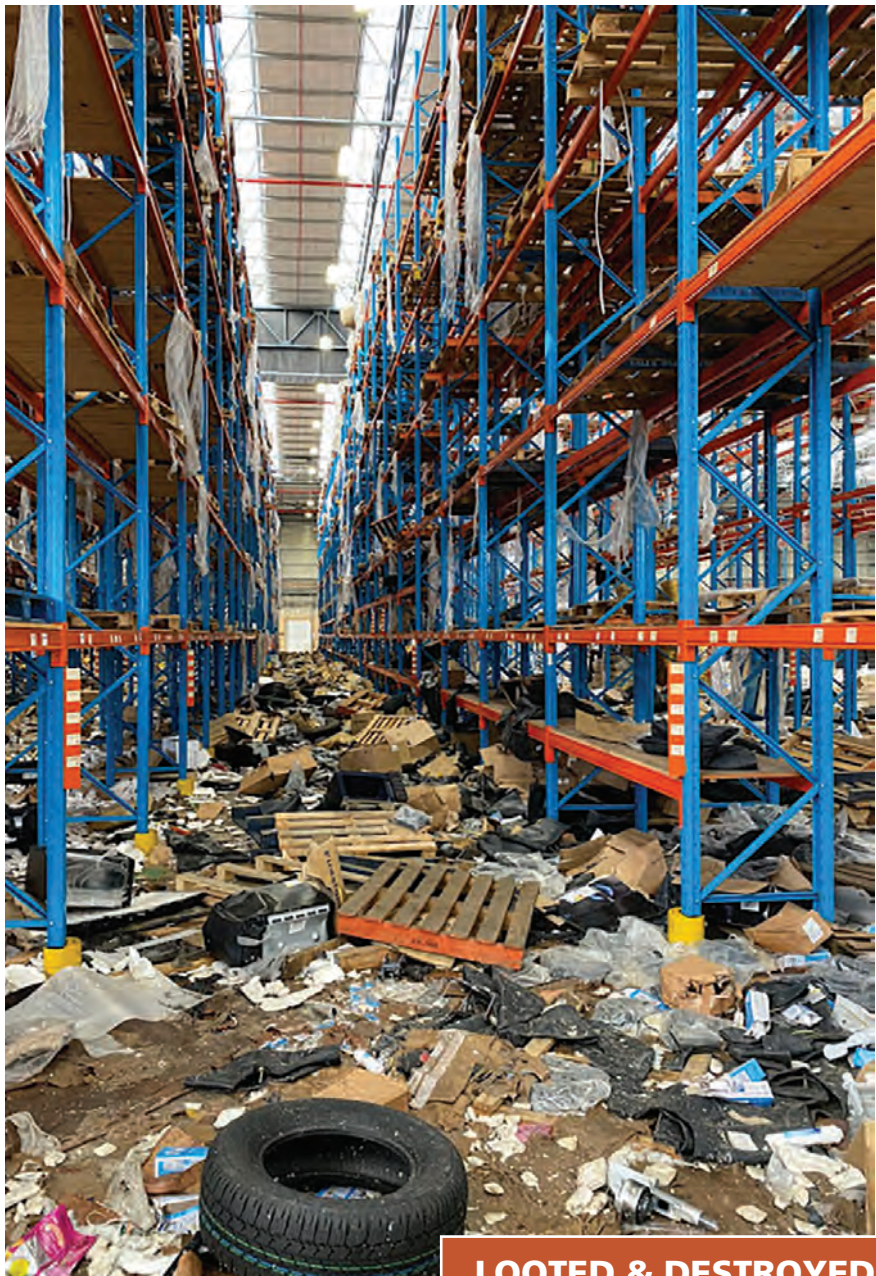
WATCH THE VIDEOS



Empty warehouse



Three kms of looters' vehicles



LOOTED & DESTROYED

LEST WE FORGET

► 31 “I wait by my phone, expecting to get the call that Cato Ridge is on fire. What goes through my mind? I become numb waiting for the call. I think of all the years of hard work to build this world class facility and wonder, will it be destroyed? Is it on fire? The call comes, I expect the worst. I cannot say hello, I just wait in silence to be told if the depot is on fire or not. I am told that it is only an old container and old trailer on the side of the building that is on fire, and not the Cato depot. Looters are making fires to keep warm, so a container and old trailer got caught up in those fires. Our building survives another day.

“Once we are able to safely do so, we will communicate timelines and further details as to the extent of the damages and shortages incurred at the depot. As far as other Value depots across the country, all are currently operational. We are assessing the situation on the roads and delivery points to determine whether it's safe to deliver stock. Most of the major retailers have closed their Distribution Centres inclusive of some of their retail

we have the best customers and appreciate you all. I am grateful to our wonderful and special Value staff who stand firm to look after Value and our customers.”

And it was not over. Throughout that night and into the next day they kept coming. The facility was occupied 24/7 from Monday morning until Wednesday at 11h00 when the Army finally arrived and secured the site. It was three days and nights of rampant looting and destruction by thousands of criminals who descended on the warehouse and stripped it to the bone taking everything of value and leaving a mere shell behind.

Celebrating 40 years of contribution



“Since the last communication, the looting at our Cato Ridge facility has continued relentlessly. The amount of people accessing the facility has increased throughout the day and it seems as if this will continue until all the stock has been depleted. What have we come to as a country that thousands of looters can come and go at our Value depot as they see fit.

“Our Value security staff have not succeeded in halting the level of looting and criminal activity. Police assistance was requested throughout the day and the previous night, sadly our calls for help were ignored. There is no hope of getting help. We are alone with no protection.

stores across South Africa. The retailers are keeping us up to date on their ability to receive stock. Where stores have been able to operate safely, deliveries have continued throughout the day.

“Due to the high level of violence and looting that has occurred over the course of the two evenings, a decision has been made to halt all night deliveries until further notice.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our customers for their messages of support and understanding of the difficult situation we all face. We have built our relationships over 40 years with you and we, as the Value team, can proudly state that

▲ It was just two months before the July ‘unrest’ that Steven Gottschalk, CEO of Value Logistics, led the company and its 4 500 employees in a wonderful day of celebration to mark its 40th anniversary. It was a celebration not only of the longevity of this company but also its contribution to the South African economy and the people of South Africa. Who could ever have imagined on that happy day that just over two months later, this company would be hit hard by looters and criminals, ostensibly to protest against the jailing of former president Jacob Zuma? From joy to horror in two months!

LEST WE FORGET

At one stage during the looting, a 3 kilometre line up of cars, bakkies and smaller trucks were parked alongside the N3 highway as their occupants climbed up the embankments towards the warehouse to loot. See *video accompanying this story*. And that was apart from the vehicles parked on the road leading up to the warehouse.

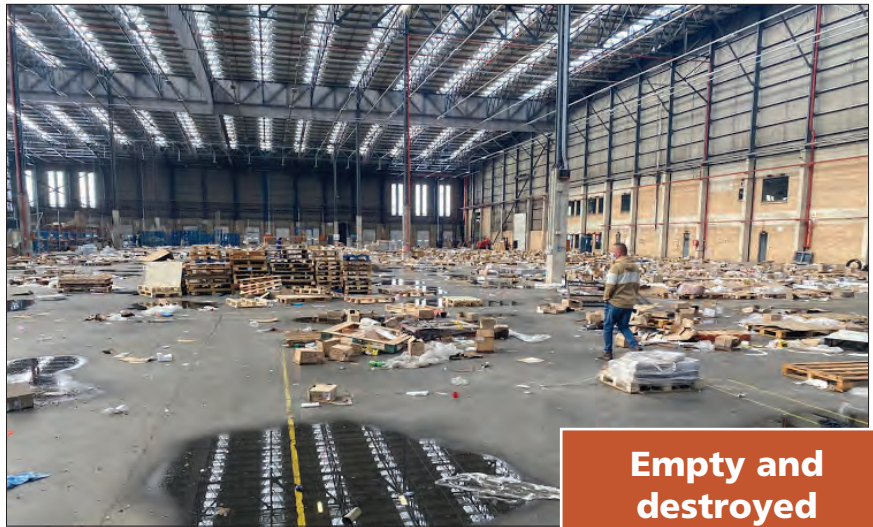
And it was not only the Cato Ridge warehouse that was hit. The Value Truck/Forklift Rental depot in Pinetown was also looted of all office supplies, trucks, forklifts and equipment. The building was totally vandalised.

Trucks, forklifts and vehicles were stolen from both depots and were used to loot neighbouring businesses and facilities. The company's on-site security staff were outnumbered by the mob of looters and thus, despite their best efforts, were unable to prevent the mass theft and destruction to the company's properties. The facilities were looted twice, both on Monday and Wednesday.

A huge concern was if the looters would hit the company's Freightpak (Chemical) facility in Pinetown. As Gottschalk said: "This facility stores chemicals and highly explosive materials and if this is set on fire, it will be a major disaster with fumes and toxic material being emitted." Thankfully, it remained unharmed.

At the end of it all, what was the total loss? I asked Gottschalk but it was far too soon at the time to determine. It would have, however, run into many, many, many – and many more – millions of Rand given that there was so much stock in the warehouse that it took three days to empty with thousands of looters helping themselves on a 24/7 spree. And that's not counting the loss of vehicles.

In terms of vehicles, six trucks were totally burnt out and another 60 were vandalised during the days of the unrest. As mentioned, trucks and forklifts were also stolen from the Value Truck/Forklift Rental depot



Empty and destroyed



Value Logistics' Cato Ridge Warehouse

in Pinetown and were left abandoned around KZN – but not before the criminals had vandalised many of them – to various degrees. The engines, for example, from a number of the stolen bakkies had been removed. "The total loss when tallied up will come to a big number," said Gottschalk.

So will the company recover from this horrible hit? I asked this question to Gottschalk on the following Monday, August 19th when I phoned to ask how things were going. His reply points once again to the absolute resilience of this industry to go on, no matter what the odds.

"We're working flat out to get

things back to normal. Our staff came in from all over South Africa over the weekend and worked 24/7 to get some order back into the system. We're working as a big and proud team to get things going again. We'll get there but it's going to take time," he said in his quiet but determined way.

Knowing this company from its inception 40 years ago, I have no doubt that it will get there. But, after 40 years of solid contribution to South Africa and its people, did it deserve this? The answer is a definite NO! No-one and no company deserved what we saw in July. □



EERIE, QUIET THE AFTERMATH OF DESTRUCTION

What Shaun McGuone, director of Investipol saw on the evening of July 14th could not have been caused by man. It was too destructive. There was no mark of civilisation; no sign of compassion, humanity, decency, respect. It was as if aliens had invaded the earth leaving behind them total devastation in their quest to annihilate the world. But alas, it was not aliens. It was South Africans. And they did not destroy the world. They destroyed trucks, bakkies, cars, warehouses, forklifts and in so doing, impacted heavy losses on the logistics sector. They also destroyed their job writes Patrick O'Leary.

**The violence that people
had inflicted on property
and vehicles was too
much to comprehend**

Sean McGuone
Director, Investipol

It's was eerie. I'd never seen anything like this. What stays with me is the smell of smoke, burning rubber and destruction. The smell permeated the air.

You just couldn't get away from it. The whole area was like a scene from an apocalypse movie".

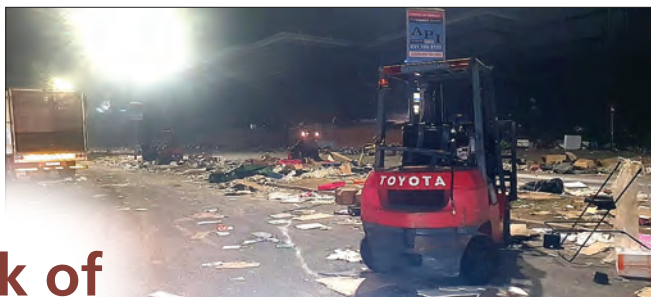
This is how McGuone described to *FleetWatch* the scenes he saw as he drove around Pinetown in KwaZulu-Natal at around 03h00 on July 14th. He was looking for a client's truck which had been stolen the day before - just one of many trucks that had been commandeered by the looters and criminals to haul away their stolen goods. Once the trucks had been used, they were either set alight or left badly damaged. So too with forklifts.

As a man who has seen more than his fair share of the worst side of life - both as a former cop and now as head of Investipol where his time on the road is spent investigating truck crashes, managing crime scenes, ensuring the safe passage of his client's trucks - he did not expect his emotions to be so torn. He had driven at night in this area many times before but had never seen or felt anything like what he saw and felt that night.

"The violence that people had inflicted on property and vehicles was too much to comprehend. It was overwhelming. I felt devastated," he told me.

As he drove slowly through Pinetown, winding his way left and right to steer clear of the debris left

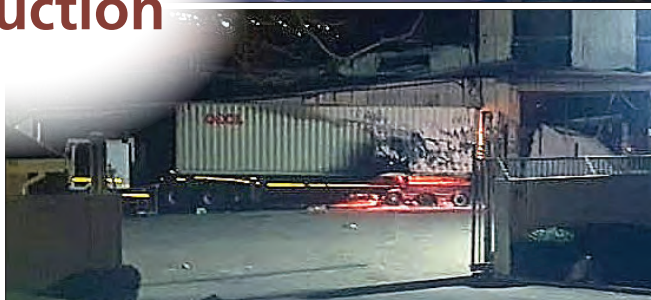
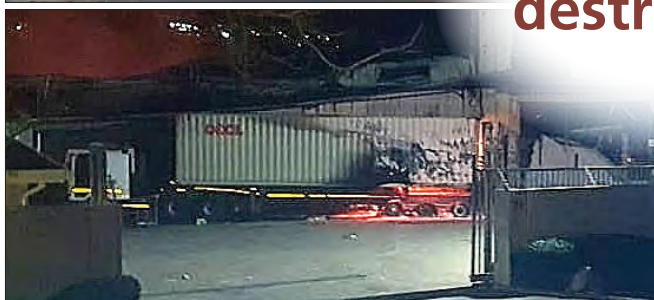
LEST WE FORGET



Lack of respect



Total destruction



◀ Shaun McGuone... 'there was no traffic; the roads were dead. The area was dead,' he recalled.

on the road from the day's marauders, he almost expected to see characters from the movie *The Walking Dead* stumbling down the road towards him. But there was no-one. There was nothing but the charred remains of trucks, cars, bakkies, abandoned forklifts – and litter, tons of it from empty boxes that been cast aside once the goods had been unpacked and stolen.

"There was no life. The small shops that are normally open during the night were closed. The pavements

were empty of people. There was no traffic; the roads were dead. The area was dead," he recalled.

The photographs he took on that night and which we feature here impart that eerie feeling of desolation. They also give an idea of the damage done to the trucking and logistics sector off the main routes like the N3 and N2 outside the focus of the mainstream camera lenses. Here we see the carcasses of dead and damaged trucks along with abandoned forklifts. And this was just one area where the rioting and looting took place. There were many more such areas – and many more such trucks. So much loss. □

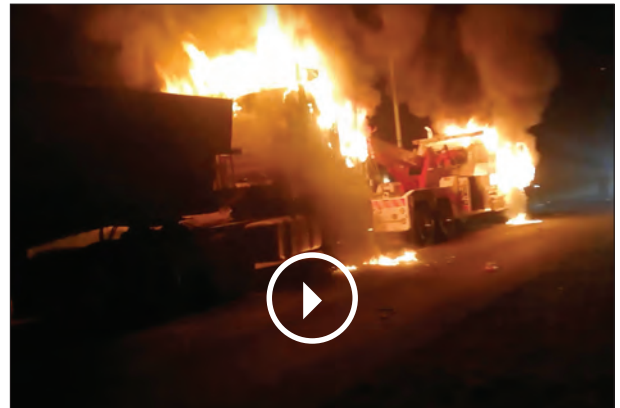
LEST WE
FORGET



THE BURNING OF THE RESCUER



WATCH THE VIDEO



Tow rig destroyed



South Africa is extremely fortunate to have a band of top professional truck tow companies such as Joey's Towing, Car Towing Services, Rieks Towing, Van Wettens and others who do the mostly unseen task of cleaning up the mess and removing burnt and destroyed vehicles left by rioters after they have wrecked their havoc.

The July unrest was no different with the tow truck guys working

24/7 from July 9th when the first 25 trucks were burnt at Mooi River. The next few days saw them working non-stop as the burning and destruction of trucks spilt over into other areas of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

These wrecks had to be removed and it was all systems go until, on the evening of July 11th, Joey's Towing got hit – hard! In what can only be described as total vindictiveness and thuggery – madness actually – the criminals ► 38



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A SUBSIDIARY OF ALTRON

LEST WE FORGET

► 38 set fire to a beautiful Western Star tow truck that was hauling a client's rig. The Western Star as well as the client's rig were totally destroyed – a total loss of around R7,7-million.

Having been on the go since July 9th, it was enough. Joey Govender, MD of Joey's Towing, decided to call a halt to all operations. It wasn't just the sight of his burnt out Western Star that made him do this. Rather it was the total lawlessness he and other towing companies had seen over the three days and nights since it all began at Mooi River. And there was no end in sight.

FleetWatch spoke to Govender on the evening of July 11th and I'll never forget his words. "We need help or there will be no tomorrow". He told me he had spoken to other towing companies and that all towing companies in KZN were standing down until the President called in the Army to restore order. "We are parking off all our tow trucks and will not be removing any damaged or burnt vehicles from the roads," he said.

"We, as tow truck operators are now making a stand as the

We, as tow truck operators are now making a stand as the government can no longer protect the trucking industry.

Joey Govender

Government can no longer protect the trucking industry," he said. "We are in the front line and have seen how the police are ill-equipped and understaffed. They cannot deal with the situation we have seen developing over the past few days. What else has to happen – how many more trucks need to be burnt and destroyed before the

President takes action and calls in reinforcements, such as the Army, to give the police the necessary back-up they need. We are not prepared to carry on like this. The President needs to act – and act fast."

Having been reporting on

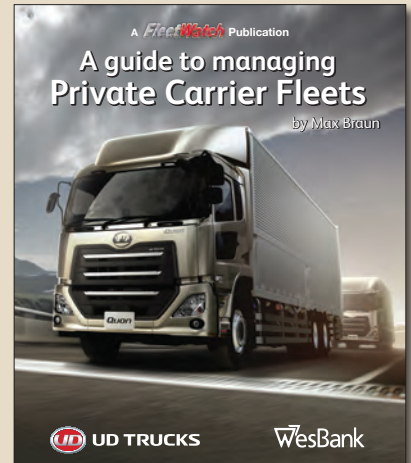
the trucking industry for some 46 years, this is the first time I know of that towing companies have stood together as one in parking off their trucks but, as Govender said: "The staff of towing companies as well as our assets are at risk and we are not prepared to carry on like this."

Not even the rescuers were safe from the marauders.

▼ The Western Star as well as the client's rig were totally destroyed – a total loss of around R7,7-million.



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VOL 2/2020

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Challenges facing the heavy haulage industry

Supporting effective developments and innovations in the road transport industry eases the cost burden on road freight transporters, says Santam Heavy Haulage.

Haulage makes the headlines daily, and usually for negative reasons. In adverse circumstances, this sector creates innumerable vicious circles that impact on one of the biggest integrated supply chains within any economy.

Take the current situation. Issues on the table include the influence of unions, looting, hijacking, xenophobia, poor road infrastructure, fuel levies and increases, the introduction of POPI, and countless compliance disclosures by operators.

Add to this the 2020 COVID-19 restrictions, which have translated into a frenetic catch-up on deliveries, and it's not an optimistic landscape. The latter alone has put pressure on drivers to work longer hours, the result of which has been a significant increase in single-vehicle accidents, says Anton Cornelissen, Head of Santam Heavy Haulage, the largest haulage insurer in South Africa of heavy commercial vehicles with a gross mass exceeding 3 500 kg.

"This is concerning, and not in the sense of claims, but rather in the loss of lives, and downtime of clients who are still recovering from the 2020 lockdowns," Cornelissen explains. "And when a truck does become disabled en route, salvage is hindered by looting, putting more pressure on financially constrained owners."

The value of haulage insurance

All these conditions underline the value of haulage insurance, and more so under Santam's umbrella, where clients are rewarded for proper risk management over time. This aids with the sustainability of their businesses, which are feeling the negative trend of many industry increases.

"Repair costs, for example, have been hiked by as much as 40%, largely as a result of the OEMs producing more sophisticated trucks, some now costing in the region of R2 million," says Cornelissen.

Industry increases also apply to claims, fuel costs, single-vehicle incidents, and hijackings. "Hijackings remain concerning in South Africa, but there is little we can do because of all the unknowns. Instead, what we at Santam Heavy Haulage are advocating is driver health and wellness.

"If the right education is constantly reinforced, this can save our clients phenomenal amounts of money. It's an aspect we are fiercely promoting with similarly minded stakeholders."

A unique, bespoke and flexible policy

Adapting to market conditions is something that Santam Heavy Haulage is renowned for, but not in the sense of increasing premiums. "No-one can take an increase of up to 40% in premiums just because the market add-ons dictate that," says Cornelissen.

"Regardless of prevailing conditions, Santam Heavy Haulage seeks reasons to keep premiums at affordable rates. Last year, we decreased our premiums and gave rebates to help our clients get through the lockdown."

This is fortunate for haulage clients who avail of Santam's umbrella of insurance products. All liabilities can be covered under one policy, regardless of whether there is cross-selling among Santam specialist divisions.

"When a basket of insurance products is in play, our underwriting morphs into a unique, bespoke and flexible policy, and allows us to decrease premiums. A bonus is that we also have products to help our clients finance the premiums," Cornelissen adds.

"Anything to anywhere can be covered. It's just a matter of customising an insurance product to a client's needs in a specific environment with due consideration for all possible challenges."

Cornelissen concludes: "We always represent our clients' best interests, which is why Santam Heavy Haulage is involved in manifesting change, staying abreast of challenges, and finding innovative ways to assist this valuable and crucial industry."

Call Santam Heavy Haulage on 011 912 8000 or send an email to quotes.transport@santam.co.za to request a quotation.



Serco fast tracks production to repair damaged trucks

Truck and trailer building company Serco is fast tracking the construction of vehicles and repairs in a concerted effort to help the transport and food sectors return to some form of normality in the wake of the recent burning and looting in KwaZulu-Natal. Serco CEO Clint Holcroft says this sector was hit hard by the unrest and it is imperative to restore supply chains as quickly as possible.

“A major portion of our builds are for perishable food distributors although recently we have focused on growing the range of dry freight options we offer to better serve the transport market arising from the current “new normal” market conditions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic,” he says.

While stepping up production and repairs in the short term to accommodate the demand, Holcroft says there are a variety of limiting factors involved, namely the availability of truck chassis as well as a four-to-seven-week manufacturing lead time from confirmed order. Rental vehicles can be hired in while critical transport equipment is replaced but this comes at a cost which will ultimately impact transporters and the consumer.

“With a truck and refrigerated semi-trailer costing around R3,2-million and a smaller truck and refrigerated body costing around R1.4-million, the replacement costs for new equipment are a significant cost to bare if not fully covered by SASRIA,” Holcroft adds.

The current situation is further

◀ One of the trucks burnt in the recent unrest in KwaZulu-Natal at Serco's yard for repairs. Serco is fast tracking the construction of vehicles and repairs in a concerted effort to help the transport and food sectors return to some form of normality.

exacerbated by uncertainty as to how long SASRIA will take to settle claims resulting in some retailers not being able to reopen or replace vehicles until confirmation is received.

Holcroft says the economy had been under severe strain prior to the violence, with the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic taking its toll on business and industry. Delays in sourcing truck chassis earlier this year due to global shortages of semi-conductor chips and certain electronic components had also severely hampered any resurgence of growth in the truck body and trailer building sector as well as the motor industry generally.

“Exorbitant increases in shipping costs and steel prices which have gone up as much as 65% since this time last year have only served to dampen an already battered manufacturing sector.

“There is a lot of turbulence in the market at the moment but with the Covid vaccine roll out gaining traction, it is anticipated that business will improve as global economies start reopening and locally businesses start rebuilding as the SASRIA funds make their way to the businesses impacted by the recent unrest.”

Looking on the bright side, Serco has recently broadened its product range and introduced drop side bodies, single skin van bodies and curtain-sider truck bodies. Sales in that area continue to grow and to some extent will plug the gap left by the drop in orders for refrigerated vehicles.

“With the shortage of trucks and imported components starting to improve, we hope to enter the second half of the year on a more positive note,” says Holcroft. □

The brands of the BPW Group:

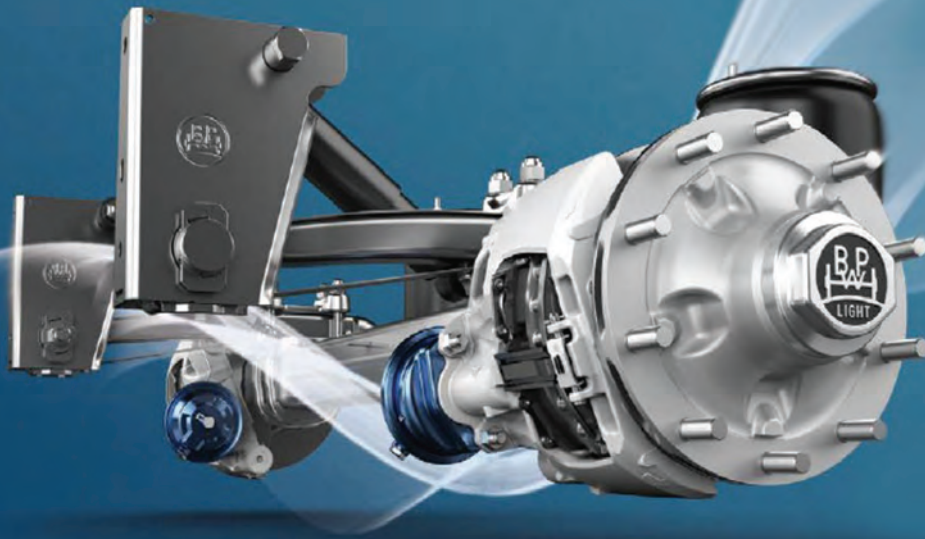


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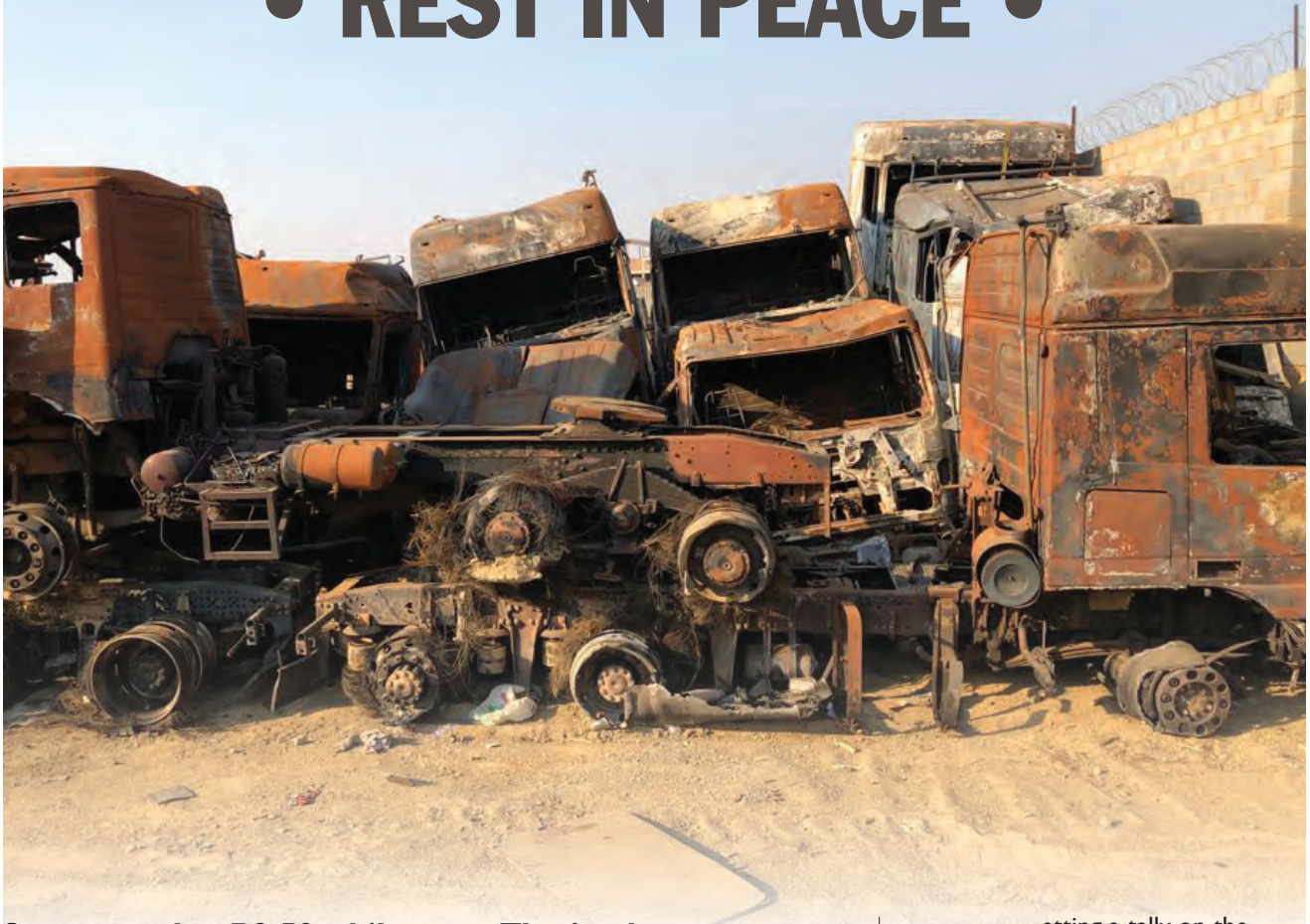
we think transport



LEST WE
FORGET

TRUCK GRAVEYARDS

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Scrap metal at R2.50 a kilogram. That's what many of the trucks that were destroyed in the July unrest will end up as. Former productive units that played a role in the daily lives of all South Africans hauling the goods of the economy to and from manufacturers and consumers were left as burnt out carcasses fit only for being cut up and sold as scrap. How many of them? That is still impossible to gauge. You saw 25 burnt at Mooi River on July 9th. That's was just the beginning. To bring you closer to the reality, FleetWatch takes you into the holding yards of just two companies in KwaZulu-Natal whose job it was to collect the trucks from the streets. And these show only the burnt out trucks and trailers. Many more were vandalised to the point where they were inoperable. They also ended up in these yards. July 2021 was the trucking industry's own 9/11 carnage writes Patrick O'Leary.

Getting a tally on the number of trucks being destroyed and damaged when the July unrest was in full swing was an impossible task. Just as we thought we had a handle on it, flames would rise up from a transport depot, or a single truck would be set alight, or a bakkie, or a car. There was no end to it. It just went on and on. While the mainstream media largely concentrated on the shopping malls and stores that were being looted and vandalised, trucks were being annihilated in side streets and depots far from most camera's lenses.

Even now, it is impossible to get an accurate figure, try as we have. One source we thought would have

LEST WE FORGET



At the time we had around 200 wrecks stored in our two yards and another 60 still to be collected from various depots and warehouses

Jacques Brand
MD, Truck & Cargo



Truck & Cargo – Pietermaritzburg



a good handle on the numbers was Sasria which *FleetWatch* asked for a segmentation of the number of trucks it had claims on. We never received it, understandably I guess as they were – and still are – handling billions of Rands of claims from all sectors.

Our best route was to contact the tow truck companies and *FleetWatch* tried to keep up with two of them, Joey's Towing and Truck and Cargo. These were two of the companies that were fetching the wrecks and damaged vehicles from the streets, warehouses and depots and taking them to their yards. But keeping up was impossible. The numbers just kept rising.

We left it until things had died down a bit. And then the true horror

hit home. I can't recall the exact date of speaking to Joey Govender, MD of Joey's Towing, but at time he said they had collected about 165 units comprising of trucks, cars, bakkies, trailers and forklifts. Some of these were stored in their yard while others were dropped at client premises, panel-beaters and other storage places. "We delivered about 25 to the dealership of one of our clients and towed five to Johannesburg and three to Port Elizabeth," he said. And they were still nowhere near finished at the time we spoke.

Truck & Cargo is a salvage contractor which works on behalf of insurance companies like Hollard, Santam and others. At the time of speaking to Jacques Brand, managing director of Truck & Cargo, this ► 44

LEST WE FORGET



Stripped to a shell, burnt beyond repair. A tragic sight.

Joey's Towing – Main yard



"We need help or there will be no tomorrow."

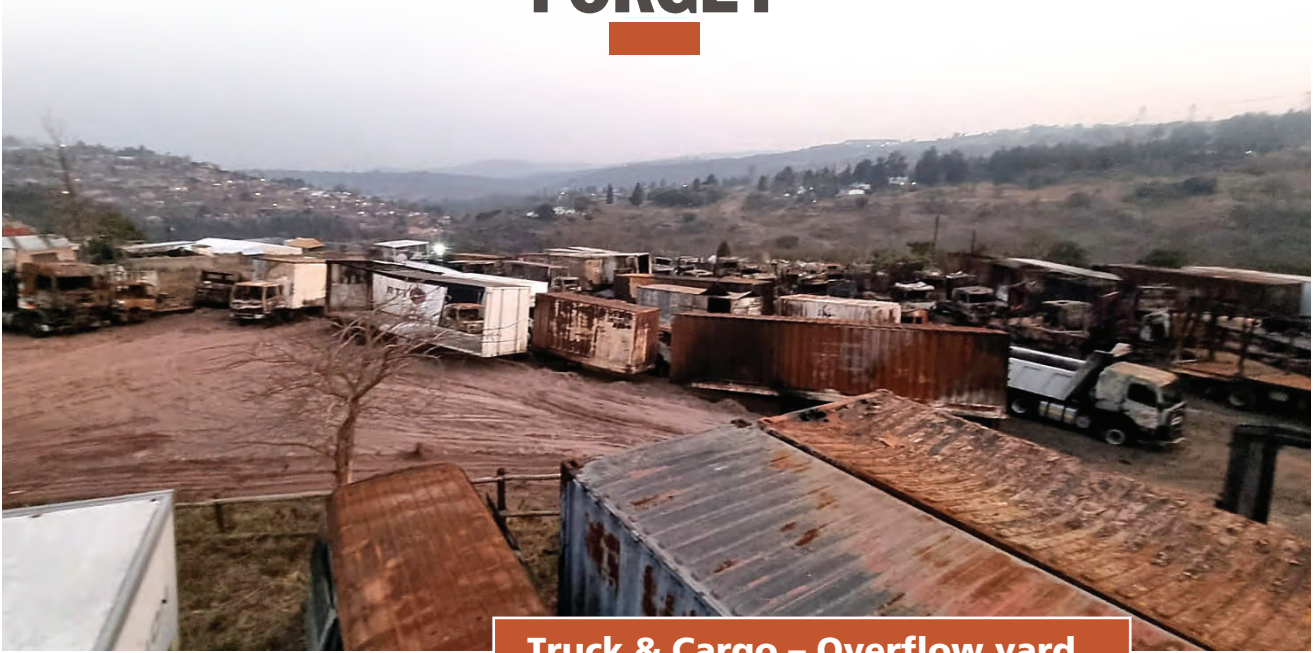
Comment made to *FleetWatch* by Joey Govender, MD of Joey's Towing on July 11th, calling on the President to bring in the army to support the police.

► ⁴³ company already had around 200 units stored in its two yards. And there were another 60 that he knew of at the time that had to be collected from various warehouses and depots; some of them total losses and others partial from being vandalised.

"We had to rent an overflow yard in Cliffdale as our existing yard in

Pietermaritzburg quickly filled up," he said. "We needed the additional space because there was a huge overflow – all resulting from the riots," he told me, adding that to help in the recovery efforts, he had brought down extra tow trucks as well as staff from his Johannesburg operation.

LEST WE FORGET



Truck & Cargo – Overflow yard



One must bear in mind that other towing companies like Car Towing Services and Riek's Towing were also collecting and storing burnt out and damaged units in their yards. Those numbers are not included in the above.

Given all this, and the inability to get an accurate number in terms of totally destroyed and damaged trucks, we don't want to leave you only with scattered tales of carnage. Some of these stories have been told elsewhere in this edition but that does not give the full picture. Rather, let's take you into the truck grave-yards where the bodies kept piling up.

In doing so, it is apt to recognise that the vehicles you see on these pages supported thousands of families via the jobs they provided. There were no pipers or gentle

words said in these graveyards. Just dead bodies. *FleetWatch* mourns each one of them as representing being another nail in the coffin of the South Africa economy. □

FootNote: The Editor thanks the management of Joey's Towing and Truck & Cargo for always taking my calls – often in the middle of the night – and for readily supplying the photographs on these pages thus enabling people to see the reality of the horror. *FleetWatch* would also like to pay tribute to all the tow truck guys from all the different towing companies who worked tirelessly in removing wrecks from all over KZN as well as parts of Gauteng. I have been on many scenes over the years where these guys work and can assure you, it is a highly skilled – and often dangerous – job. We lift our hats to each and every one of you for being true heroes.

The looting and unrest in various parts of South Africa has had a massive impact on the majority of sectors measured by the Ctrack Freight Transport Index. "It was terrible to see all the hard work that business has put into recovering from the effects of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions go up in smoke within a few days," said Hein Jordt, managing director of Ctrack South Africa, commenting on the latest cTrack Freight Transport index.

The most recent index shows a split set of data. On a year on year basis, the numbers look extremely strong for the sector. However, the quarter ending in July shows the first decline in a year.

The quarterly and yearly data is smoothed, so it is not easy to spot the damage in these numbers, particularly because many sectors - such as road freight - were very strong in June. The monthly Ctrack Freight Transport Index paints a clearer picture of the damage done by the looting as well as the downtime of the Transnet computer systems.

The decline between June and July is the steepest decline since April 2020, when level five lockdown restrictions were implemented. (see Graph 1)

A decline of 9,7% (slightly estimated due to some Transnet Port data not being available in time) between the months of June and July shows that the freight transport sector was severely affected by the looting in KZN and Gauteng. As a result, the overall Ctrack Freight Transport Index declined to levels last seen in August 2020. It is almost as if a whole year of progress was wiped out in a few weeks.

Every day over 6 500 containers move in and out of South African ports. There is no way that this operation can run without the sophisticated computer system that is in place. Modern logistics is a system that is held together by information and computer networks. Hackers know this and were most probably hoping they would be paid to put things right in the wake of the chaos caused by the downtime of Transnet's computer systems.

Ctrack Freight Transport Index



A year of progress wiped out in a few weeks

The damage to the South African economy caused by both these events was significant and will be felt for some time. While the crossing of borders is still tedious due to the COVID test requirements, the impact could last longer than normal. The timing of these two incidents, in close succession of each other, could mean that delays at the ports could take weeks, if not months, to resolve.

The country's GDP could have grown by about 1% if not for these two events, which affected the logistics industry centred in

KwaZulu-Natal but with effects felt in Gauteng as this is where the majority of the goods were headed.

All but one freight sector declined

The majority of sectors measured by the Ctrack Freight Index have declined in recent months. Sea freight was the biggest loser declining by 24,3%, followed by storage and handling with a decline of 16,2%. Even the two fastest-growing sectors, road freight and air freight, have declined with losses of 9,3% and 3,2% respectively.

The measurement of truck movements through 84 key points across the country backs this data up with a decline of 11,5%. However, points in KwaZulu-Natal reported more significant declines of over 20%. Pipelines were the only sector to show growth.

While the catch up has already started, it will take some time for the backlogs across all sectors to be cleared.

Losses are massive

The monetary losses and the delays suffered by the road freight sector are estimated to be in the region of R9-billion, although some of those losses should be made up in the catch-up period. Transnet ports also lost well over R1-billion.

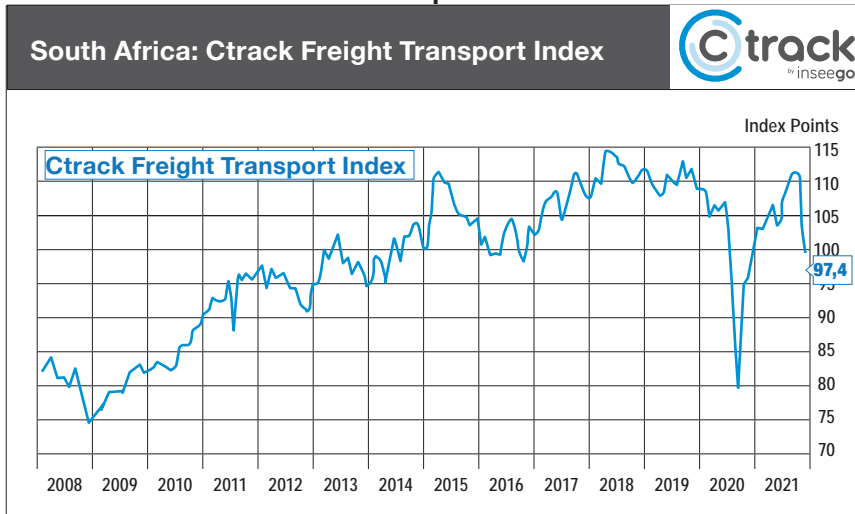
The losses in other sectors are still to be calculated but with ten major distribution centres destroyed while many other storage facilities suffered damage (for analytical reasons, these losses were incorporated into the road freight numbers), there will still be knock-on effects. These effects could include rising costs of distribution as the number of distribution centres and warehouses is less. One can also expect higher insurance premiums after this tragic run of events.

Staff costs have also risen, as drivers have had to wait for weeks without transporting anything, while trucks not in use mean that the capital cost per load will have to increase. Drivers and crew who could move also felt personal financial losses.

Putting the intense situation into perspective is a report by a single

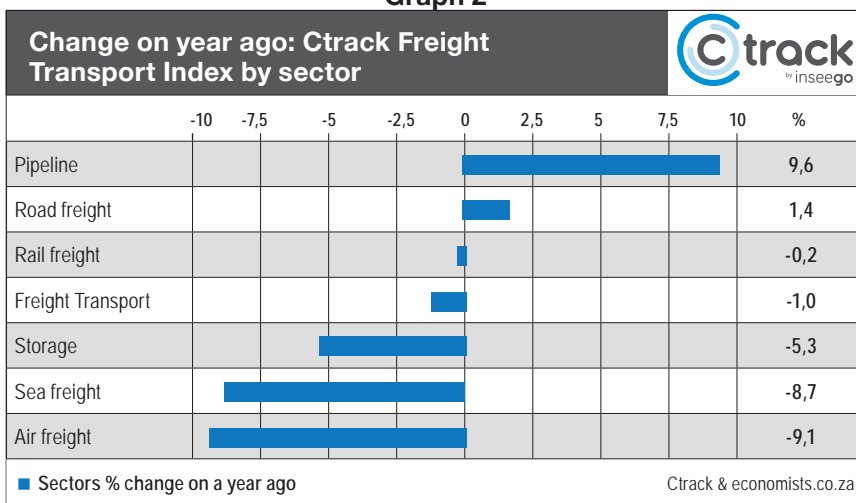
LEST WE FORGET

Graph 1



Ctrack & economists.co.za

Graph 2



towing company that towed 160 trucks in and around KZN due to looting and destruction. The RFA estimates that about 250 trucks were totally destroyed while many more suffered minor damages such as broken lights and windows.

Clients had to close for days on end, as intermediated stock for manufacturing did not arrive while, in some cases, shelves stood empty. The global microchip shortage caused by worldwide supply chain issues was exacerbated by shipments being stuck in the harbours for an additional ten days.

Every cloud has a silver lining and it was great to see communities and businesses coming together to clean up after the looters and hopefully, Transnet has learnt that hackers consider them a target too.

“The industry will learn and make adjustments. But it is not something we wish to see again. Two big hits in one year are just too much to bear,” says Jordt. □

Note: While the figures on Sea Freight are an estimate, good data was received on bulk commodities but less so for breakbulk. The majority of estimating is based on TEU and truck movements in the Durban area and on the N3 as a basis for this month's estimate.

The Ctrack Freight and Transport Index is compiled by renowned economist Mike Schussler as a joint service with Ctrack to the industry.

Jul 2021 Tables

| Percentage change between | Rail | Road | Pipeline | Sea | Air | Storage and handling | Ctrack Freight Transport Index |
|---|-------|-------|----------|--------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Quarter to July: 2021 vs 2020 | 12,2% | 22,4% | 29,0% | 6,6% | 66,6% | 11,6% | 19,3% |
| July 2021 vs June 2021 | -2,9% | -9,3 | 8,8% | -24,3% | -3,5% | -16,2% | -9,7% |
| Quarter to July 2021 vs Quarter to April 2021 | -0,2% | 1,4% | 9,6% | -8,7% | -9,1% | -5,3 | -1,0% |

Note: the row highlighted in grey is the main Ctrack Transport and Freight Index values used

June 2021 Tables

| Percentage change between | Rail | Road | Pipeline | Sea | Air | Storage and handling | Ctrack Freight Transport Index |
|---|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Quarter to June: 2021 vs 2020 | 6,6% | 33,9% | 1,8% | 24,3% | 86,6% | 26,1% | 27,4% |
| June 2021 vs May 2021 | -1,6% | -0,2% | 9,3% | 6,8% | -6,8% | -10,7% | -1,5% |
| Quarter to June 2021 vs Quarter to March 2021 | 1,1% | 5,1% | -1,1% | 6,6% | 1,4% | 10,6% | 4,9% |

Note: the row highlighted in grey is the main Ctrack Transport and Freight Index values used



Patients saved R49-million on healthcare costs via Imperial's flagship, Unjani Clinics

Imperial creates rather than destroys value

While the past few weeks have highlighted the totally destructive elements of South African society – led by people who add absolutely no value to society – it is ironical that one of the companies that suffered losses and damages in the unrest in KwaZulu-Natal, namely the Imperial Group, has just issued a report highlighting that in 2019 and 2020, it created value of R98-billion and R146-billion for its stakeholders and

communities in South Africa and Nigeria respectively, as confirmed by a recent Socioeconomic Impact Assessment study undertaken by Accenture.

While the final tally of losses of the 'unrest' is still being assessed by various sectors, one report attached a figure of R50-billion being stripped from the GDP. And let's not forget that 300 people died and an estimated 150 000 people have lost their jobs through South Africa's own version of 9/11. Through the actions of all involved in the 'unrest', value has been totally destroyed. Now compare this to the R98-billion value added to South Africa by just one business group.

"Imperial plays a key role in connecting Africa and the world and improving people's lives with access to quality products and services. As a purpose-driven organisation with Environmental, Social and Governance imperatives embedded in our business strategy, all our businesses remain committed to not just creating but sustaining value for all our stakeholders across our 25 countries of operation," says Mohammed Akoojee, Imperial's Group CEO.

"We take an holistic approach regarding value creation wherein value is created not only for Imperial

but also for other stakeholders in the value chain, including the development of our communities and countries of operation."

In assessing the direct and indirect value created for Imperial's stakeholders, these reports looked at its impact through five themes, namely Imperial's Greatest Asset (people), serving as the 'Gateway to Africa' (operations), reaching Beyond Imperial (external stakeholders), transforming by adopting a 'Go Digital Go Green' approach (adoption of digital technologies and focus on reducing negative impacts on the environment) and Going the Extra Mile (Corporate Social Investment).

Each of these themes was assessed through a framework that systematically considered value to society, value to the logistics industry and to market access, as well as value to partners.

In addition, the socioeconomic impact on society was reviewed in light of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Aspirations for 2063 defined by the African Union, as various countries, including South Africa, have acted to integrate the goals and targets into their national development plans to align policies and institutions behind

► 50



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► 48 them. Imperial's contribution to the applicable goals and aspirations is highlighted throughout these reports.

"The outcome of the reports also supports Imperial's objectives to continue to operate as a responsible corporate citizen that is committed to delivering sustainable value and extending its impact to all key stakeholders across the organisation's value chain," adds Akoojee.

Here are some highlights from the report for the financial year 2020.

Value

- R3.5bn employee related expenditure on over 13 000 employees.
- R483m taxes contributed.
- R9bn procurement spend, 70% with B BEE compliant suppliers.
- 3.2% of operating profit spent on CSI.
- R23m training spend; 900 000 training hours.
- 10 teaching hospitals supplied with chemotherapy treatments in Nigeria.
- 95% contract renewal rate in Nigeria.

We create a holistic approach regarding value creation... not only for Imperial, but other stakeholders in the value chain, including the development of our communities and countries of operation.

Mohammed Akoojee
Imperial Group CEO

Savings

- R11.5m in socio economic costs saved by avoiding accidents.
- 12.8m litres of water and 1,266 tons of waste recycled; 541 940 kwh reduction in electricity.

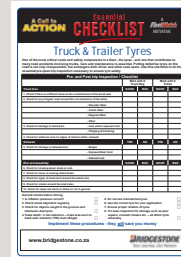
- Avoided 5,700 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Patients saved R49m on healthcare costs via Imperial's flagship Unjani Clinics.
- In Nigeria, access to safe pharmaceuticals saved ~35,800 lives.
- Fairly priced medicines saved patients Nigerian Naira (NGN) 59.5bn.

Interesting facts

- More than 13 000 employees.
- 900 000 m² total warehousing under coverage.
- Travelled 360 x South Africa's road length for customer deliveries.

FleetWatch cannot but help comparing the positive contribution made by this company to the negative impacts of the 'unrest'. The job of politicians is to create a climate in which businesses can thrive so as to add value as seen above. Imperial has added value despite politicians, not because of them. Please take note of this point President Cyril Ramaphosa. □

POSTERS

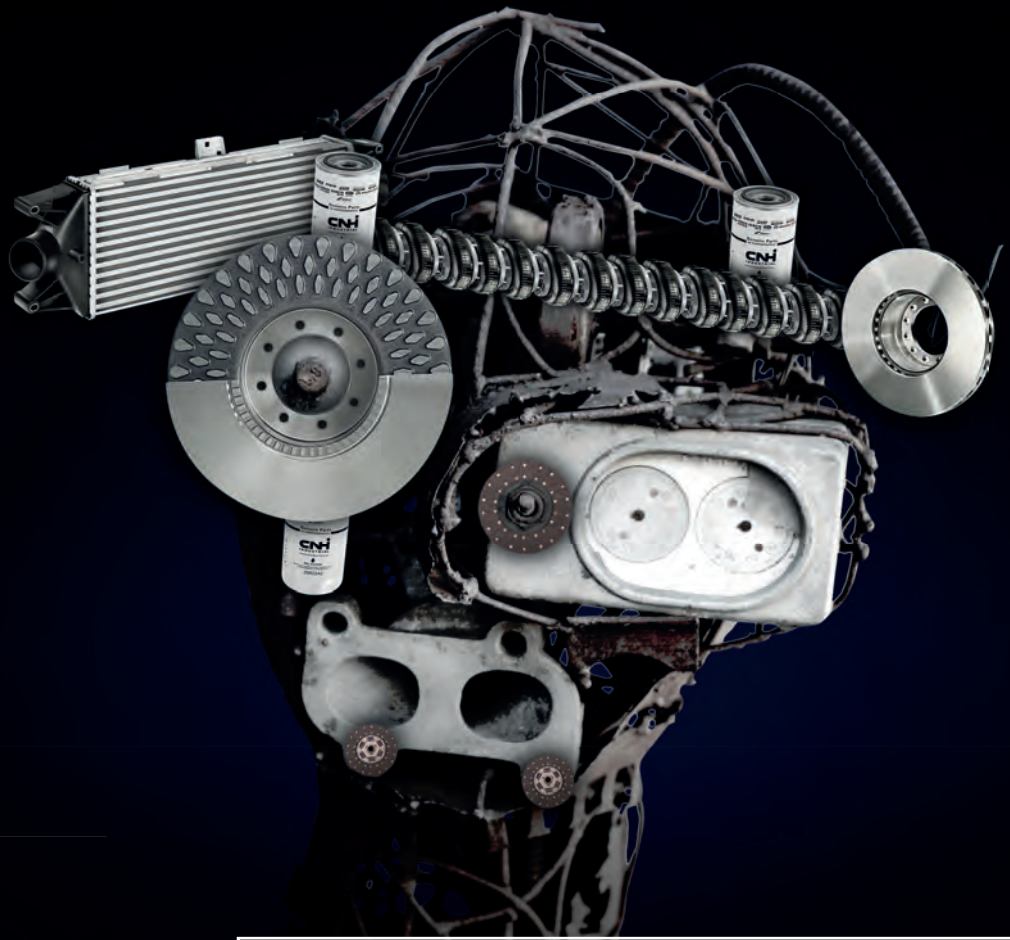


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Not a road test

▲ *FleetWatch* never has and never will go into road tests at the top end of the truck range on trucks such as to Iveco Stralis pictured here until we are satisfied that we have the right people and the right monitoring equipment – which costs many thousands of Rand - in place to add real value. In Germany, one magazine alone employs four fully qualified mechanical engineers on its road test programme. We don't have such resources and don't possess the arrogance to think we can go up against the hundreds of developmental R&D engineers employed by the OEMs without being fully geared up and professional. Fully fledged truck road tests are a science not a jolly-ride. We do think, however, that we can add value in terms of driving impressions at the lower end; note – impressions not full evaluations. Maybe things will change but at the moment, that is our stance. The Iveco Daily Hi-Matic is our first go at it. What do you think? Value adding or not?

EDITOR'S COMMENT

By Patrick O'Leary

I've always been honest with our readers and that's not about to change - so here goes. When *FleetWatch* was approached by Iveco to test drive one of its Iveco Daily vans models, we weren't all that keen. The reason being that since the launch of *FleetWatch* in 1994, we have never gone into the truck test arena for the simple fact that we don't think we are fully geared up to evaluate – on a professional basis – products that international trucking companies have spent millions of Euros, Dollars or Yen developing. These international companies have highly qualified engineers, designers and others throwing their weight and brains behind the research and development of their products and it is these guys we would be going up against.

I recall speaking to the Editor of one of the German truck magazines many years ago. Now those magazines over there are truly substantial with tons of advertising, plenty of staff resources and huge circulations. We were having a few pints at a truck racing event being held at the Nürburgring race track in Germany. He told me that on their magazine alone, they had four fully qualified mechanical engineers working full-time on their truck test programmes. With such resources, it is no wonder that independent truck tests are highly respected in Europe. Now how the heck are we supposed to match such resources?

So, not being all that keen had nothing to do with us disliking or not wanting to drive the Iveco Daily. It had everything to do with us not being able to emerge from the exercise with a qualified and value-adding evaluation for the market. I'm a trucking hack not an engineer or a professional truck driver. So I said no. However, over the next few days, I gave it further thought.



DRIVING IMPRESSIONS



Clare Vale

▲ Clare Vale, ace racing driver, drifter and director of The Truck Man used dealership, has been brought in by *FleetWatch* to give her impressions of the Iveco Daily Hi-Matic. There is a big move to incorporate more women drivers into the driving fraternity.

Having always shied away from truck testing for the reasons stated above, did this mean we couldn't perhaps add some value at the lower end of the scale? Were these vehicles easy to drive? Were they driver friendly? Were they practical for purpose? Since the advent of Covid-19 lockdowns, South Africa has seen a boom in on-line shopping with deliveries being made to thousands of homes around the country. And these deliveries are done by bakkies and vans. Are all those drivers as professional as we would like them to be? I reckon not and given that, how does the modern van help them in being safe on the roads?

Another trend gaining ground is the entry of more women into the truck driving fraternity. On this point, I state categorically that *FleetWatch* is hugely concerned about putting women drivers on long haul 24/7 routes. Not because of any doubts of their ability – after training – to be professional drivers but purely from a safety and security perspective and especially at night. However, given South Africa's circumstances, short haul and local distribution is an arena that could be suited to women drivers. There are, in fact, many already operating in this arena.

Now before any couch-based ranters and ravers start accusing me of being patronising, condescending, sexist or

demeaning to women, I have one piece of advice. Take a hike, but just don't take it at night. Ask any male long-haul truck driver if he feels it's safe for women to be out there on the road at night and he will tell you categorically "no". As I write this, there is a critically injured driver – male driver – in hospital after being attacked by some thugs when he stopped on the side of the road at Beaufort West. If he had been a 'she', there is no doubt 'she' would not only have been beaten up but also raped. But let me exit this now.

After taking all this – plus other thoughts into consideration, my conclusion was to give it a go. However, in line with my women driver thoughts, I contacted Clare Vale, ace racing driver and a director of used truck dealer, The Truck Man, to ask if she would also give it a go. I didn't want a full-on road test but more a driving impressions evaluation. Maybe we could add value there.

Clare, for those who don't know her, is an ace racing driver who was the first lady to race in the premier national WesBank V8 Supercar series. That was back in 2007. In March of 2009 at the WesBank V8 race at Kyalami, she became the first lady racer to take pole as well as lead a V8 race. Clare also became the first lady racer to have a podium finish in WesBank V8 Supercar history: at the historic East London Grand Prix circuit Clare finished a podium 3rd place in October 2010.

She then moved to the drifting motorsport discipline becoming the first female driver to participate in the Supadrift Series and is now focusing on national drifting. Her Black

"We don't possess the arrogance to think we can go up against the hundreds of developmental R&D engineers employed by the OEMs without being fully geared up and professional."

Art Racing Mustang produces serious muscle – 600hp and 450kW of naturally aspirated power. The team has also developed a turbo powered Subaru BRZ which Clare drives in events such as Hill Climbs and the international Gymkhana Grid event. She is a past President of Motorsport South Africa's Women in Motorsport Panel. She has been nominated twice for the Colin Watling Award for service to motorsport.

Off circuit, Clare is a director, with her husband Don Vale, of The Truck Man in Boksburg, a reputable dealer in used trucks and trailers. Don is well known to many in the trucking industry having been involved in this sector for many years.

On the road safety side, Clare has also held the title of Road Safety Ambassador for the Road Safety Foundation and was also appointed as Chairperson of the Women for Road Safety Forum. Another accolade she can boast of is being appointed as Brand Ambassador for Continental Tyre South Africa's Vision Zero road safety campaign. She is also a member of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists.

So that is the lady *FleetWatch* wanted behind the wheel to give her driving impressions of the Iveco Daily. Read what she has to say first – then I'll pop in later. □

DRIVING IMPRESSIONS



Iveco Daily ticks all the right boxes

By Clare Vale

When I was invited by Patrick O'Leary, editor of *Fleetwatch*, to spend a few days with the new Iveco Daily, I jumped at the opportunity. I'm a big fan of vans in general – my daily drive is a Mercedes-Benz Vito and we use panel-vans on a daily basis in our used truck business. We also regularly use a van filled with tyres, rims and spare parts to tow a car trailer when we go racing.

Many years ago, we used one of the very first Iveco Turbo Daily vans as a breakdown vehicle for our new truck dealership in Cape Town, so I was keen to sample the latest evolution first hand.

The new Daily scores full marks for good looks, both inside and out. The bold new grille not only looks impressive but also allows for improved air circulation and the modular, three-piece bumper allows for cheaper replacement costs if one

of the corners is damaged. The new long life Full LED headlights look great and are super effective at night.

The cab interior is equally impressive. The stylish dashboard rivals that of many cars with easy to read dials, the conveniently mounted auto shifter and a centrally mounted 7" high res colour display screen. The new HI-CONNECT infotainment system comes equipped with Apple CarPlay and AndroidAuto so will hook up easily to the driver's phone - and charging points abound.

The stylish, fully adjustable steering wheel has remote buttons for the audio system (including the phone), and would not look out of place in an upmarket sedan. The squared off lower section not only looks sporty but also allows a little extra space for the more portly drivers among us.

Seating for three (driver + 2) is comfy, although the sound deadening panel behind the seats does restrict



Easy access

▲ The loading area is easily accessible via the wide opening rear doors and passenger side sliding door.

DRIVING IMPRESSIONS



▲ Air-conditioning comes as standard fitment.



▲ The 7" colour display screen. The rear camera also feeds to this screen.



▲ Badging on the model we drove – 35-170 Hi-Matic



▲ Dash mounted gear lever. The 8-speed automatic ZF gearbox is superb.



▲ Comfortable interior seats three – driver plus two.



▲ Reverse camera makes backing up safe and easy

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW



▲ Floor mounted tie down points to secure loads



▲ Grab handles make it easy to climb in and out the loading area.

adjustability to an extent and one of my drivers felt that the seats could use a little more padding. The manual air conditioning system is factory fitted (a huge plus, as anyone who has sweated or frozen with an aftermarket system can confirm), and it works well on both hot and cold settings.

One glaring omission we found is that the mirrors only have manual adjustment. I would think that electric mirrors are an essential safety feature for this type of vehicle. The lack of cruise control could also be an important factor in some applications. This is, however, available as an option.

The 11m³ loading area is easily accessible through the wide opening rear doors and passenger side sliding door. The interior is equipped with floor mounted tie down points and convenient grab handles at both doors make it easy to climb in and out. At first glance, the interior panels look flimsy, but on closer inspection, they are apparently made of a type of composite material that is both scratch resistant and hard wearing.

There is a very handy reverse camera mounted above the rear doors which feeds to the 7" screen,

making backing up to a loading bay a cinch. There is also an automatic reverse buzzer.

The new Iveco Daily really starts to shine once you get behind the wheel and hit the road. I found it to offer an outstanding driving experience. The rear wheel drive test van was equipped with the Euro 5 FIC 3.0 litre turbo diesel motor, offering 170hp (125kW) and 430 Nm of torque.

The standard ZF HI-MATIC 8 speed automatic gearbox is superb and shifts smoothly, making city driving a breeze. Coupled with the Telma Electromagnetic retarder, this van is an absolute pleasure to drive in traffic or on the freeway. The retarder is said to provide up to 80% of the vehicle's braking needs and I can vouch for its effectiveness. I believe it to be a fantastic safety feature and it must save a fortune on brake system maintenance costs.

I was unfortunately unable to test the Daily's towing capabilities but I'm sure this engine and gearbox combination would make for a superlative towing experience. Fuel consumption was more than acceptable on our short test, returning a 8.6 l/100kms on a varied trip of just over 100 kms.

The new Daily is well equipped with safety features, including Electronic Stability Program (ESP), ABS, EBD, trailer sway mitigation, Hill Hold Control, driver and passenger airbags and disc brakes all round. Iveco has managed to keep the tare weight just under the Code 10 licence requirement, so the Daily can be legally driven with a Code 8.

Summary

This Iveco Daily could easily find a place in our fleet and I would be more than happy to drive it on a daily basis. The auto 'box and retarder are a huge plus and it was difficult to find fault with such a versatile, driver friendly package. □

Price when tested:

R705 950 recommended retail

Warranty:

2 years/Unlimited mileage bumper to bumper

Service plan:

2 years/120 000 kms;
Service intervals: 30 000 kms

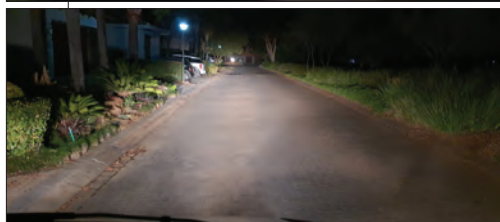
DRIVING IMPRESSIONS



▲ The grab handle and step makes the climb up into the cab easy.



▲ Check this out for a layout. Features and luxury abound in this cab.



Lighting up

▲ The LED lights are great for visibility. Top is dim and bottom is bright. I can see you.

So much more than a box on wheels

Stepping out of your little car into an Iveco Daily 35-170 Hi-Matic van is one giant leap for mankind. When you exit your car, it's a grunt-and-groan side-sliding action. When you enter this van, it's a cliff climbing action. Luckily though, the low down step and side grab handle makes it easy and the climb up into the cab is worth it because once you're inside, you're in a world that many can only dream of. This isn't what I expected. What happened to the old VW FleetLiner? This isn't a tin van. It's a luxury bachelor's pad.

When agreeing to accept the Iveco Daily 35-170 Hi-Matic van for a few days of driving impressions, I was adamant that we would look at the model from a driver's rather than an operator's perspective. Certainly there are definite meeting points between the needs of both but in essence, the driver wants comfort, ease of driving and safety while the operator wants lowest operational and lifetime costs.

It is thus I start this story with the climb into the cab. Why? Because that's what a driver of this van would do many times a day as he does his delivery rounds. On this point, I would have liked to see a second grab handle fitted to the column behind the driver's right shoulder for when he exits. It's a long way down so better to hold on tight.

So up I went and before closing

the door I immediately looked for a cup holder for my Coke can. Joy to the world. There was one built into the console on the right. Perfectly positioned. I later found another one in the centre. I love that. I hate any vehicle that doesn't have cup/can holders. Next to the middle one, by the way, is a handy little pull out to keep your fuel and other cards. It's the little things like this that make life for the driver so much easier.

I then closed the door and sat looking around. Wow! I'm sure the dashboard of Elon Musk's SpaceX rockets don't look as fancy as this. The 7" colour display screen was prominent but then there are other dials and gadgets all over. Take a look at the picture and you'll see what I mean.

The seat is three ways adjustable so it was easy to get into the ideal driving position to suit my height and reach. OK, seat belt on and let's now get the side mirror adjustments done. Whoa! Iveco – where is the side mirrors adjustment button – left and right? It

has to be here somewhere I thought but no, it wasn't.

This is an omission that needs to be corrected. It's a huge hassle sliding back and forth over the passenger seats to adjust the left side mirrors. This will not be a problem if the van is allocated to a single driver as, once adjusted, they remain set to suit the driver. However, if there are multiple driver

changes, it does present a problem. That said, the large windscreen does, however, give you great visibility.

With this criticism as a start, you may think I'm going trundle off a list of other faults as we go along. But no, I'm not. Hold on, hold on - there is one more thing. It needs a small light over the cab entry steps for entering and exiting at night. I had to find my footing a number of times as you just can't see the step – and you need it to get in and out. Apart from that, I really can't find other faults. The faults that



By
Patrick O'Leary

DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

GREAT TOUCHES FOR DRIVERS

did arise were with me - the driver, not the van.

Take that same evening when my daughter wanted to go for a drive. As I set off down the road, she shouted: "DAD! DAD! THE TREE!" What tree? "The one in front of you with the overhanging branches. You're going to hit the branches." Ooooh gats! She was right. I forgot that the height of this van is a little bit more than that of a dinky-toy car, a lot more in fact.

That caught up with me a few days later when I took a drive to the Brits Mall. Turning into the normal entrance, I stopped just before the overhang barrier telling me that the maximum height is 2.4m. My height was 2,66m. I reversed out and went round to the deliveries and fire engine entrance.

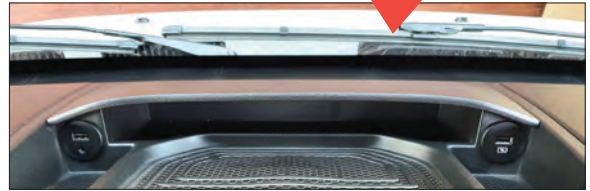
Driving this van is a pure pleasure with the most amazing feature being the Hi-Matic 8-speed automatic ZF gearbox. You don't have to concern yourself with the intricacies of the gearbox itself. Just know that you have a marvel of technology working for you.

When you look at the markings on the gear lever, it looks a bit like 'Eeeesh! This is complicated'. There so much on it. Not so. There's P (Park), R (Reverse), N (Neutral), D (Drive) and on the right is Eco (Economical) and Pwr (Performance). There's also a + and - used for manual gear changes. For me; the D was perfect. You don't have to do a thing beyond just tapping it into D. But first you have to put your foot on the brake pedal. That's your gear change activation 'button'. Being in traffic all day, this gearbox will be a boon to drivers. It is totally effortless allowing you to concentrate on the road and the dangers it presents.

What's more, as Clare has mentioned, it is coupled with a Telma electronic retarder which I felt kick into operation when coming down a long steep hill. Also, when nearing a stop street it slowed the van down without me having to brake. That was fun but I preferred braking myself. All this, of course, saves on maintenance



▲ It's the small things that count for drivers, like a can/bottle holder:



▲ Thank goodness. USB charging points for cell phones and other gadgets ensure you're always in contact.



▲ Storage space is a 'plenty for documents – and chips. This shows only two on the dash. There are compartments all over the place.

costs. It has disc brakes all round by the way.

What I would strongly suggest is that you set all the comfort and pleasure features from the Hi-Connect entertainment system on the 7" screen to what you want before setting off. The simple reason being that distraction driving is a huge cause of crashes nowadays. Also, get your phone linked up and then use the controls on the steering wheel to answer and make calls. Also great to see was more than one USB charging point for phones and whatever other gadgets you need charged. Air conditioning, by the way, is standard.

As for storage compartments in the cab, I guarantee whoever designed the inside of this cab is a distant relative of my wife. There is just so much packing space – in the doors, under the seats, on top of the dash. There's nooks and crannies everywhere to store documents, refreshments and chips – lots of chips.

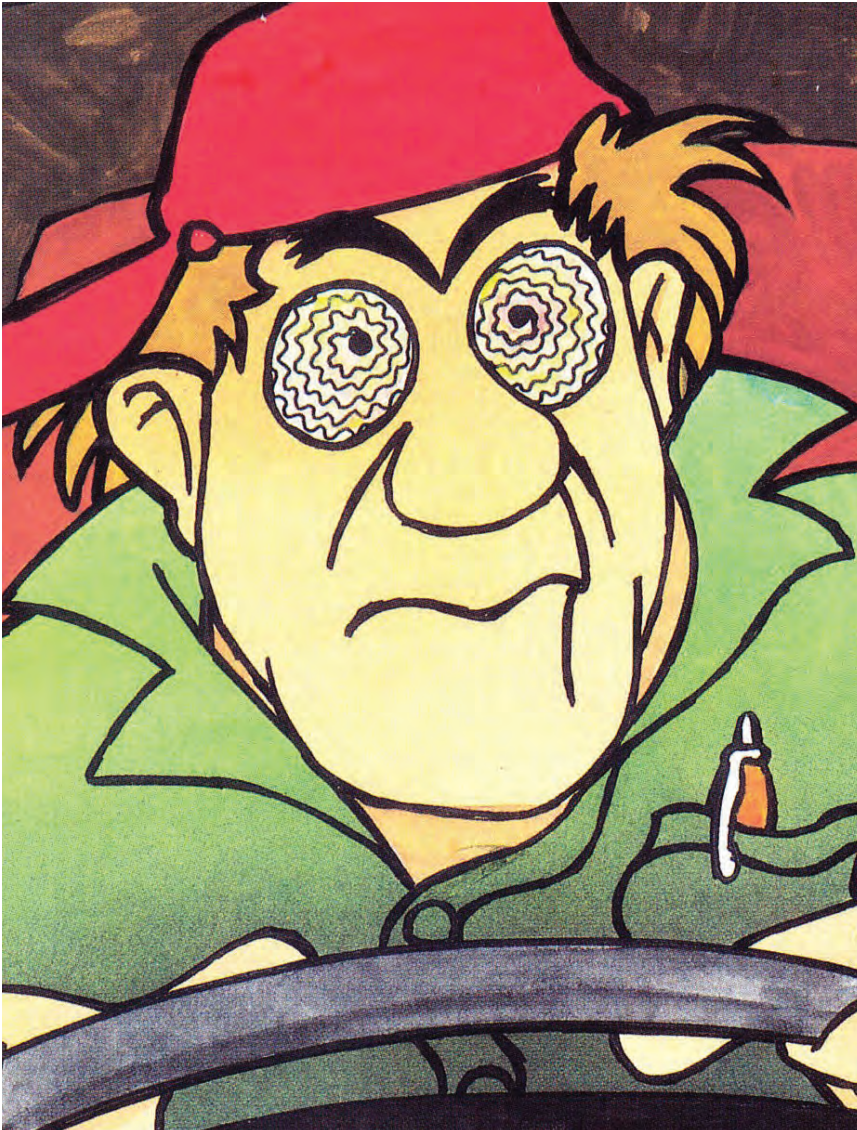
I hate incorrectly set headlights and while the Iveco has adjustment settings to raise or lower the length of the beam, the LED lights themselves are superb. Look at the two pictures accompanying this article. With these lights I can see you out there which is important as it is estimated that 40% of South Africa's 15 000 road deaths per year are pedestrians. It is also fitted with daytime running lights

which switch on whenever you turn the key on – and the driver cannot switch them off. This should be a standard feature on all new vehicles.

With online shopping having seen a massive increase during Covid lockdowns, vans like these will operate increasingly in estate type environments where roads are narrow and space limited. In this regard, I did a little trip around the estate I live in pretending to be a Take-A-Lot or courier driver. Nowhere did I feel hemmed in. The turning circle is superb. This thing can turn on a ticky. (For our younger readers, that is two-and-a-half cents packed into a tiny old-school silver coin).

If I was applying for a driver's job and you pointed me to the Iveco Daily Hi-Matic, I'd jump at the job. However, on one condition. That you provide me with full in-depth training. This is not just a van. It is a technological marvel and I would want to know how everything works – intimately and in full detail. To maximise the benefits of all the safety and other features, you don't just get in and drive it. You need to become a true professional – and that can only be achieved through training.

There is so much more to this vehicle than a box on wheels. Get to know it all and that will be good for the driver as well as for the bottom line of the operator. □



Driver Hypnosis: Are you aware while awake?

by Dave Scott,
Technical Correspondent, *FleetWatch*

A few weeks ago *FleetWatch* picked up on a debate among some truck drivers of the phenomenon known as 'Highway Hypnosis'. There was a lot of confusion around the concept being expressed with some acknowledging it and others denying its existence. The truth is: It is a reality and with drivers hauling long hours on long stretches of our roads, *FleetWatch* thought it apt to revisit this subject, especially given that fact that truck drivers are pushing more miles and longer hours in the absence of rail. Dave Scott, our technical correspondent, originally brought it to our attention in an article some years ago. It is as relevant now as it was then.

Everybody has heard of driver fatigue. However, what is not as commonly recognised is a phenomenon called DWA - Driving Without Awareness. You've probably experienced it - you are awake and rested but realise when you reach your destination that sections of the journey have gone by without you even noticing them.

Alcohol-induced DWA is couched in the legal term of 'sane automatism'. It happens after a heavy night on the town when the sorry creature staggers to the mirror in the morning and asks his reflection: "Where were we last night?" However, don't confuse sane automatism with DWA which can occur in the mind of a relaxed, fit and sober-minded driver.

Clinically known as the principle of entrainment, where the mind follows outside patterns, DWA has to be recognised as a serious pitfall to someone behind the wheel of a rig hauling 56 tons at 100km/h - very few travel at the legal 80 km/h. This type of driving demands quick reaction and decision making.

Bigger than fatigue?

Doug Condra, editorial director of the authoritative USA magazine, *Heavy Duty Trucking*, posed the question in a leader article way back in February 1995. 'Could DWA be a bigger factor than fatigue?'

According to *Heavy Duty Trucking*, the USA National

DRIVER HYPNOSIS

DRIVER SAFETY

Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)* regards truck driver fatigue as a major culprit in accidents, based on studies done at the time. The facts drawn from the USA are worth noting as a mirror image to the southern Africa road transport industry, and for operators to benchmark themselves against. The significant findings from the NTSB research and listed in Heavy Duty Trucking were:

- Of 107 drivers who had survived single truck accidents, 62 of them - or 58 percent - were fatigue related.
- Drivers in fatigue related accidents had slept an average of only 5.5 hours in the 8-hour rest period before the accident, and an average of 6.9 hours in the 24-hour prior to the accident.
- Many truck drivers get their sleep in small segments - average four hours at a time - which hampers driving abilities.
- The off-duty period in the USA does not consider the time needed for eating, personal hygiene, recreation or the inability to fall asleep immediately. Now add to all this the concept of DWA and you find the picture is not a pretty one.

Highway hypnosis

DWA is experienced by all drivers as 'highway hypnosis' and follows a condition in which the driver becomes mesmerized and fails to anticipate the need to respond to an unexpected situation.

In addition to conscious perception, the brain is also capable of perceiving things without being consciously aware of them. When the original research for this article was done, *FleetWatch* spoke to a clinical psychologist by the name of Armand Kruger, who put it clearly: "It is not what you see or hear - it is what your brain does with it. The brain sees the outside world as its code. It is a closed system that will readily pick up patterns in light and sound format which it comes across".

He cited as an example a vehicle travelling down a tree-lined road. "In this situation, the strobe light effect inside the vehicle caused by the

FATIGUE FACTS

Of 107 drivers who survived single truck accidents, 62 or 58% were fatigue related.

* NTSB, USA

intermittent flashes of the sun can bring on a minor form of epilepsy - petit mal, or absence seizure. For a brief period of three to five seconds, there is a total loss of consciousness and concentration. No-one is home, and the brain has responded to outside stimuli to shut down of its own accord," said Kruger.

Brain waves

Let's go into a few of the technicalities here. Brain waves are measured in Herz units and have been identified to occur within four coded levels:

- **Beta:** Occurring at 13 plus Herz, beta waves have small close peaks and are often charted when a person is awake and alert. This is where there are high levels of concentration and is the ideal state for driving a vehicle.
- **Alpha:** This is a state of deep relaxation. The 8 to 12 Herz alpha wave signifies the alert, relaxed mood in which a person is highly receptive to outside signals. This state can be induced through hypnosis, meditation, listening to music, and even by watching television. Kruger said that this is a very natural and creative state of mind but not ideal for driving a vehicle. "The alpha condition has a narrow span of attention with a slow tempo, and the focus is on the inside - not the outside," he said.
- **Theta:** At 4 to 7 Herz, this is a state of sleep or deep trance.
- **Delta:** A condition of narcosis - or when the brain is endangered by injury or disease - may cause the brain to lapse into delta wave emission at 1 to 3 Herz.

In Kruger's opinion, the top end of the alpha code is a natural phenomenon. "People are more in a trance than out of one," he said. No doubt all management will agree with this!

DWA occurs at the mid-to-bottom range of the alpha code. DWA - or Highway Hypnosis - takes precedence over fatigue. The potent additive of fatigue only promotes and hastens the progression of the driver's mind from alpha into theta. It is then that the driver will nod off.

Constant battle

The act of driving is a constant battle of demand to stay in the beta not alpha condition. "The brain is the traffic coordinator and a neurological retard from beta to alpha means a slow body as the physical condition adjusts to the mental condition. This can slow reaction times by between three to five-seconds. In fact, a five second reaction delay is easily achieved in a state of fatigue and that's more than enough for a disaster to occur," said Kruger.

In South Africa, the possibility of a driver experiencing a combination of fatigue and DWA is very real. ▶ 60



Lack of safe roadside facilities

▲ Very often, due to the few secure facilities available, drivers are forced to stop on the side of the road.

DRIVER HYPNOSIS

DRIVER SAFETY

► 59 Consider the following:

- There is no recognition or enforcement of driving hours in South Africa.
- Some of the vehicles on long hauls have inadequate or no sleeper cabs.
- There are very few roadside facilities for rest in a secure environment and drivers see it as being dangerous to stop on the side of the road. This encourages the driver to push on against the onset of fatigue.
- Incentive programmes are in place which are structured on a base income plus additional cents per kilometre over certain target distances - or a straight percentage of turnover. Such programmes promote prolonged driving.
- The SA Road Ordinance is stretched to the limit of 22 metres and 56 tons. This demands even greater driving concentration.

Minds and bodies under siege

In all, the minds and bodies of South African drivers are under siege. In fact, the low accident figures for heavy-duty trucks compared to other national accident statistics are remarkable when one considers the circumstances of the road transport industry. Responsible operators have instituted an enforced rest period from 23h00 to 04h00 when their drivers may not be on the road.

Taking into account that there are long distances to be covered in

Responsible operators should, and some have, instituted an enforced rest period between 23h00 to 04h00 when drivers may not be on the road.

monotonous circumstances, even the rested healthy driver working for a responsible employer can fall prey to the problem of DWA. This goes for light and heavy vehicle users in the challenge to remain in the beta state of concentration behind the wheel.

Given the current set of circumstances, one must then ask what practical tips can be given to drivers to help them avoid DWA and fatigue. Here are a few suggestions:

- If driving all night, beware the critical hours of the early morning before sunrise. It is then that you will easily slip into the relaxed alpha state followed by the next pattern of theta and sleep.
- Sun visors must be adequate and working. There are times in the early morning or evening when the sun shines into the eyes with a strobe effect and the brain will, on its own accord, react to this stimuli.

- The focus and reach of headlights are critical in night driving. A beam that is too short can result in a similar strobe effect which the brain will pick up on and react to.
- In-cab music must be upbeat. Low, slow romantic music or music with a slow heady base drumbeat are translated by the brain into alpha waves, and the body reacts accordingly.
- Slight movement raises the levels of concentration - chew gum, move your shoulders and, while smoking is not to be encouraged, the action of moving with a cigarette, not the nicotine injection, is a wakeful action. Wind the window up and down at irregular intervals - feel the rush of air on the face and hands.
- Check that you are sitting upright. Don't slouch. The reason for this is because breathing and posture go hand in hand. Do not slide down and slump behind the wheel. Do not get into deep slow breathing in the area of your diaphragm.
- In these days of modern communication, arrange irregular calls from base. The talker must be trained to be excited, fast and the agenda varied from a standardised list of items to which the driver must respond. Keep the brain in the Beta level.
- Avoid big meals and alcohol. Small frequent meals are preferable.
- Find out what your drivers are doing among themselves to stay awake that can be added to this list. ► 62





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DRIVER HYPNOSIS

DRIVER SAFETY

- ▶ 60 • Run an internal dialogue which centres on the expectancy of achievement, the reaching of the destination, the satisfaction of the customers, the delivery of the load and pride in a job well done.

Driver training has to be taken beyond the realms of manipulating the vehicle controls. The development of attitude and self-knowledge are vital to combating the combined effect of fatigue and DWA. These subjects have to be explored with drivers.

The response of the brain to visual stimuli and its own interpretation of the stimuli places even more importance on visual acuity and vehicle technical features that support clear pictures at speed. Fleet audits reveal an alarming lack of testing for eyes and trends in eye health. Poor eyesight can only accelerate highway hypnosis and fatigue.

DWA has been under study for some time in Europe. It appears that inattention and the failure to perceive are the biggest single causes of crashes.

There is much more than just fatigue to address among our drivers - the training of the past has to be overhauled as well. In addition, incentive schemes must be examined from the point of view of not only how much a driver earns, but also to what limits he pushes himself in the process. Perhaps it would be wise to remember that we are dealing with sociable human beings, not manipulators of controls. □

DWA/Highway Hypnosis happens when a driver is mesmerised and fails to respond to an unexpected event.



▲ Driver training is essential and should go beyond realms realities of manipulating vehicle controls.

STAY AWAKE – GET OUT AND MOVE!

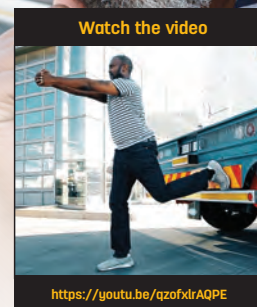
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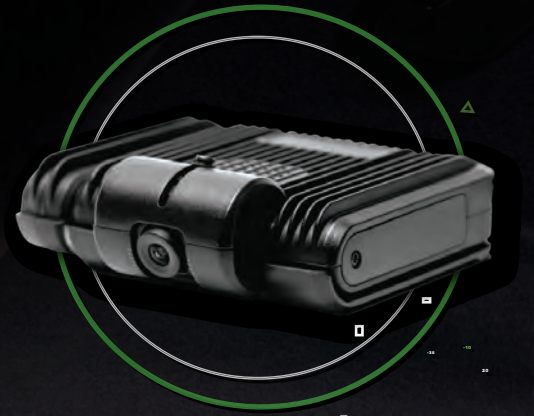
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Spotlight on reverse logistics

The announcement of a recall by Tiger Brands of some of its canned vegetable products has put the spotlight on reverse logistics, an often-neglected aspect of supply chain management, according to SAPICS (The Professional Body for Supply Chain Management).

Tiger Brands recalled certain canned vegetable products in the KOO and Hugo's brands due to a small number of defective cans from a packaging supplier. The products

included baked beans and encompass goods produced over a two-year period: from 1 May 2019 to 5 May 2021.

"Product recalls are a nightmare for organisations and supply chains. This latest food recall in South Africa should be prompting all organisations, including manufacturers, retailers and logistics service providers, to examine their reverse logistics plans and skills," says SAPICS president MJ Schoemaker. ▶ 66



▲ Tiger Brands recalled certain canned vegetable products in the KOO and Hugo's brands due to a small number of defective cans from a packaging supplier. The products included baked beans and encompassed goods produced over a two-year period: from 1 May 2019 to 5 May 2021. The logistics in getting 20 million items back from consumers and retailers around the country as has been implemented by Tiger Brands on some of its canned products is a massive task that involves in-house and contracted trucks hauling goods back from the stores to the manufacturer.



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REVERSE LOGISTICS SUPPLY CHAIN

►⁶⁴ It is reported that around 20-million canned products were recalled by Tiger Brands. Imagine the logistics involved in getting 20 million items back from consumers and retailers around the country!

“Having efficient, tried and tested recall plans and effective reverse logistics programmes in place is essential for manufacturers, retailers and everyone in the end-to-end supply chain. It can mitigate the potential damage and turmoil associated with a recall, including ensuring the health and safety of consumers, maintaining good relationships with suppliers and customers, preserving brand reputation and retaining the trust of consumers, and reducing the potentially enormous costs associated with a recall,” says Schoemaker.

Reverse logistics encompasses all the activities associated with a returned product or product components that are effectively moving backwards through the supply chain. It includes recalled goods and parts of products that are reused or recycled; like the oxygen cylinders that have been vital in the supply of medical oxygen during the COVID-19 crisis.

“Reverse logistics is often forgotten because most companies’ primary focus is on the forward supply chain, or forward logistics, which gets products to market and has the greatest impact on a business’s bottom line. However, organisations ignoring the reverse

Reverse logistics is often forgotten as most companies focus on forward logistics which has the greatest impact on the bottom line. However the need for reverse logistics planning should not be ignored.

About SAPICS

Since its foundation in 1966, SAPICS has become the leading provider of knowledge in supply chain management, production and operations in Southern Africa. The organisation is the South African custodian of a variety of internationally recognised certifications.

supply chain and the need for reverse logistics planning and competency do so at their peril,” Schoemaker stresses.

Recognising the importance of reverse logistics, it was one of the topics that was in the spotlight at the recent SAPICS Conference, the leading event in Africa for supply chain professionals. A presentation by retail logistics experts Anton Coetzee and Floris Visser of consulting firm Relog examined reverse logistics as a forgotten part of the supply chain, including its role in waste management, recycling and the journey to zero landfill.

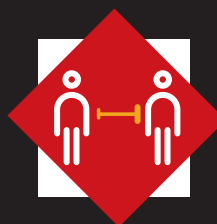
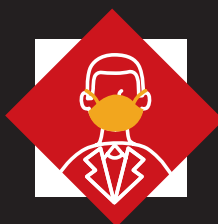
“We tend to focus on the forward supply chain from producer to customer,” says Coetzee. “What about the reverse supply chain and how it fits into the circular economy? What happens to the packaging, waste generated, returns and oversupply?”

The presentation provided examples and case studies on how distribution centres are being designed to reduce waste, recycle and preserve energy and water, and the need for efficient, effective reverse logistics programmes.

Schoemaker notes that successful supply chain management has become essential to compete successfully in today’s competitive global marketplace, and supply chain roles must be filled by people with the requisite knowledge, skills and qualifications, including in the overlooked area of reverse logistics. □

FleetWatch salutes all truckers

STAY SAFE STAY WELL





Who gets what? Going behind the scenes of a trucking accident claim recovery

HUNDREDS OF SERIOUS trucking accidents occur on South Africa's roads each year, causing immeasurable damage through injury, loss of life and financial losses to truck owners. A comprehensively insured truck operator has the benefit of a timely assessment and pay-out of losses following an accident; but much happens after the claims pay-out to ensure fair outcomes for both the insured and third party.

In the event your driver was not to blame for the accident, your insurer can institute a recovery of damages process against the third party on your behalf. If the tables are turned, and your driver carries more blame, the third party might institute a recovery process against you. A recovery instituted against you will be handled by your insurer in line with your third party liability cover. So, depending on the circumstances of the accident, you could either pursue a recovery or end up defending a liability claim.

There is no one-size-fits-all method to assign liability for an accident and it usually comes down to a detailed assessment of each loss event. The major influencer in the liability or recovery debate is the quality of the information obtained at the accident scene. We find that a clear description of the accident, backed up by independent witnesses, is the minimum required to figure out which party is most responsible for the loss.

Technology is making our lives easier. One example is that the dash cams used by many of our insureds are an absolute game changer in determining blame. There is no better evidence than camera footage that gives a clear view of how the accident happened and the circumstances surrounding it. This footage can also assist our accident reconstruction experts in producing their detailed technical accident reports.

An important consideration before using video footage in a recovery is that it can be discovered by the opposing party during court proceedings. You have to discover the good and the bad in that evidence, whether it works for your case or against. An insurer will therefore only use such footage if it

gives a clear view of how the loss happened and assists in clearing up a disputed version of the facts. All of the aforementioned factors assist in reaching a settlement between the insured and third party.

The determination of liability and recovery following a motor vehicle accident is regulated under the Apportionment of Damages Act, No. 34 of 1956. This Act provides that where there is more than one party involved in an accident, any claim one party may have against the other can be apportioned in accordance with each party's respective negligence or liability. The degree of negligence of each party is dependent on the facts of the accident and is guided by the apportionment that would likely be applied by our courts.

Truck owners must take note that the third party in the recovery process can also claim for the damages it may have suffered as a result of the accident. This is done on the basis that there is also contributory negligence on the part of the insured or its driver. Where the accident is partly the third party's fault and partly the insured driver's fault each claim against the other is reduced in proportion to their negligence.

For example, if it is determined that the third party is 80% negligent and the insured is 20% negligent for the accident, the third party would be liable for 80% of the insured's damages less 20% of their own damages. This leads to some interesting outcomes based on the value of the respective assets on cover.

Many of our clients are frustrated by the recovery process because they believe that they should be able to recover their full damages, when in reality, the apportionment of liability infers a degree of negligence on both the insured and third party. It is rare, in practice, to encounter an accident that can be blamed entirely on one party or the other, and the majority of accidents on our books are settled based on shared negligence.



Dash cams are an absolute game changer in determining blame.

MANUFACTURER PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

DTBSA's Gerber and Gaba Show



▲ Maretha Gerber has been appointed Vice President: Sales and Marketing of Daimler Trucks & Buses Southern Africa.

Two significant changes in the executive management at Daimler Trucks & Buses Southern Africa (DTBSA) have been announced and, sorry Ziyad Gaba but following Women's Month, which was in August, we're putting the lady first. There's no discrimination here hey. It's the ladies' month so just hang in there for a few paragraphs for your turn.

Maretha Gerber, who many in the market have got to know through her active role as Head of Mercedes-Benz Trucks Southern Africa, now takes up the post of Vice President: Sales and Marketing of Daimler Trucks & Buses Southern Africa (DTBSA). In this role, she takes over responsibility for the Mercedes-Benz Trucks, FUSO Trucks, Western Star, Unimog and Fleetboard brands. That's a huge portfolio but this is one heck of a lady. Check this out...

Gerber holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing and her experience in the company spans over two decades. In 2000, she was appointed as a Key Accounts Manager and she went on to occupy various management positions in the fields of sales, dealer network and marketing.

What attributed to her flourishing career is her business acumen which she displayed in 2016 when she became the Dealer Principal for the Mercedes-Benz Rosebank Dealership. In 2018, she added to the South African list of successful and influential women in transport when she assumed her responsibility as the Head of Mercedes-Benz Trucks Southern Africa.

► Ziyad Gaba is now Vice President: Customer Service, Parts and Downstream for DTBSA.



And now, step in Ziyad Gaba (when are we going to have a Men's Month?), a quiet and humble man who has a deep passion for all things trucking. Gaba now holds the title of Vice President: Customer Service, Parts and Downstream for DTBSA. His previous position was Head of FUSO Trucks Southern Africa where, without doubt, in his quiet but focused way, took this brand to a new level of acceptability and respectability in the market.

Gaba is a graduate from the University of the Witwatersrand. He has an Honours degree and a Certificate in Road Transport Management where he no doubt came under the scrutiny of the late legend, Uncle Jack "it's all in the book" Webster.

He started his working career in the trucking industry as a graduate trainee in 2004 at Mercedes-Benz South Africa, which led to a promotion as the Regional Sales Manager for Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles.

With over 16 years of experience and a proven record of accomplishment in the company, he continued to fulfil several managerial positions until, in 2014, he accepted the position of National Sales Manager for FUSO Trucks and Parts Sales, which paved the way for him to be appointed as the Head of FUSO Trucks Southern Africa. His new role will now see him acting across all the brands in the DTBSA stable.

According to Michael Dietz, President and CEO of DTBSA, these changes are subsequent to the company's efforts to align with the overall global strategy of Daimler Trucks AG and Daimler Trucks Overseas, and to meet the ever-changing needs of customers. Both functions will report directly to Dietz, who has full confidence in both Gerber and Gaba continuing to spearhead innovation and value in their new roles.

"Both Maretha and Ziyad are seasoned industry leaders and they have an in-depth knowledge of DTBSA and our markets. Their new roles create excellent opportunities to accelerate the growth and sustainability of the company, giving us the framework we need to continue prioritizing the diverse needs of our customers. We look forward to their invaluable contribution in shaping the future of DTBSA and wish them success in their new endeavors," says Dietz.

From all of us at *FleetWatch*, we extend a huge congratulations to these two great people on their new appointments and wish them the best of luck as they head down their new roads. There are some mighty challenges facing the industry and now is the time when seasoned and incisive leadership is required.

The Gerber and Gaba show is now on. Look out for it.

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Another big up for women following August Women's month is that independent financial services business, the Apio Group, is expanding its insurance offering with the development of a trucking insurance division – and the division is being led by Sharné Liebenberg, a lady with over 12 years of experience in the trucking insurance industry having initially started her career in the claims department of a trucking brokerage.

She has worked as a senior account handler for a number of transport divisions within the insurance industry, notably Santam Heavy Haulage and Hollard Trucking and brings all this experience to the Apio team.

According to Richard Hood, co-founder and director at the Apio Group, Apio is always looking at expanding its in-house expertise by developing pockets of excellence in specific industry segments to serve its clientele. The trucking industry has been identified as one such segment.

"Risks in trucking are unique and need a specific suite of products."

"The greater reliance on road transport in South Africa and the growth of online shopping, due in large part to COVID-19, has resulted in significant growth in this sector. We believe this is the perfect time to expand our offering and are delighted that industry expert, Sharné Liebenberg, has joined the Apio team to plot this new and exciting course," says Hood.

"I have joined the Apio Group to develop the trucking insurance division with the aim of building custom-built products and risk management services to provide the ideal solution for each individual client," says Liebenberg, adding that the risks in trucking are unique and a specific suite of products and expertise is required to meet the increasing demands of these clients.

New head for trucking division of the Apio Group



"I am excited about the recent transformation in the industry which sees women playing a greater role in this sector."

Sharné Liebenberg,
Head of Trucking Insurance,
Apio Group

"The range of offerings will include both conventional as well as non-conventional products from market-leading, reputable insurers (both direct and broker-only insurers), ensuring innovative structures that fit the clients' needs and cater for the company's specific risk profile. The aim is to provide a holistic view of managing risk coupled with a sustainable insurance programme where the overall objective is to reduce the cost of risk over the longer term," she says.

Liebenberg is passionate about trucking insurance and this passion comes across strongly when you talk to her. She's like an excited steam train charging down the tracks. She also talks fast so you have to listen fast.

"It is about helping business owners understand their unique exposures and providing an adequate solution and not merely providing a cheap product. Whether they have a fleet of 100 trucks or only one – they deserve the same level of service and effort when it comes to handling their insurance portfolio".

She reckons that the one thing she's been taught from the start of her career is to tackle each challenge from the point of view of how she would like her own query to be handled.

While currently not part of any of the women in trucking forums, Liebenberg says that being part of these in the future will ensure Apio is firmly established as a player in the trucking insurance space. She applauds the various initiatives currently driven by original equipment manufacturers (OEM's) to train young female drivers, and financiers extending credit to female-owned trucking companies.

"I'm excited about the recent transformation in the industry with women playing more of a role in this sector" she adds.

From all of us at *FleetWatch*, we extend a big congratulations to Sharné on this appointment. The insurance sector is critical to truckers and as she says, there is far more to it than just providing the cheapest price. We'll catch up with Sharné later to see how it's all going as she steams down the tracks. □



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New GM at Rhenus Logistics



Women's Month 2021 will always be remembered by Laurice Burrell as the month when she broke through the senior executive ceiling of what is predominantly a male-orientated industry by being appointed general manager at Rhenus Logistics, effective September 1st, 2021.

Managing Director Dirk Goedhart says: "Diversity and inclusivity are key components of the Rhenus culture. Laurice Burrell has been appointed to this position to bring not only her remarkable leadership qualities but a fresh and different perspective to management that will assist in negotiating what I anticipate may be difficult roads ahead."

To highlight the importance of women in transport, Laurice Burrell shares her views on the role of women in logistics.

Q: Was it a dream of yours to work in logistics and transport?

A: Before I joined the logistics industry, I was involved in the import and export of stocks in the corporate gifting industry. This sparked my interest in global trade and in 2009 I joined an international freight forwarder in a finance role. Here, I discovered the incredible complexity and dynamics of the global freight market. With a woman's eye for detail, I enjoyed how each part of the industry is so different - and which you need to fully understand to successfully move

a consignment. Not one day is ever the same.

When you feel you need to challenge yourself, all you need to do is move to a different part of the industry. You can spend an entire lifetime in logistics and still be constantly challenged and have your mind expanded every day. Being in freight forwarding exposes you to so much more than 'transport'. Rather you need an understanding of global market trends that influence every decision you make for clients. If you embrace the ever-changing environment and daily learnings, you will love this industry.

Q: How has the logistics landscape changed in the last 12 years?

A: We live in a completely different world today. Let's just take the past year, during the pandemic: rates have soared, transit times have become unreliable, airfreight capacity has decreased drastically. Adaptability is essential for business growth in this environment and Rhenus has swiftly adapted. More importantly, the industry has become more inviting and accepting for women. We have proved our worth through strong administration and planning skills.

Q: Tell us about your journey to where you are now.

A: After a few months in the industry, I realised that my passion lies with operations and I moved into airfreight, predominately dealing with Africa. Thereafter I was appointed head of Air, Road and Ocean operations within the exports mining division. I excelled in customer service and made

the obvious career step to Client Service Manager at Rhenus Logistics in 2017. After four years, I was promoted to my current position of General Manager effective from September 2021. I am thrilled and very excited about this. My motivation is to make a difference and add value to everything I am part of, whether it's supporting my team and helping them grow as individuals; or leading from the front, which is my management style.

You can spend an entire lifetime in logistics and still be constantly challenged and have your mind expanded daily.

Q: How do you think the transport and logistics landscape may change?

A: Digitalisation is a crucial driver of change in the industry. Live data is key for the transparency of global processes. Diversity is another change: women have come a long way - the value we add is increasingly recognised and I expect more women to find careers in logistics. Diversity - not only of gender but also of race - is key to drive competitiveness and productivity. As women, we see things differently, adding immense value to our solutions.

Q: How does Rhenus Logistics support women?

A: As an equal opportunity company that embraces diversity, Rhenus focuses on empowering employees, giving each the opportunity to grow and define their optimal career path, globally. Employees receive regular training, the chance to study and complete industry certification, and support.

From all of us at *FleetWatch*, we congratulate you and wish you well in your new position. Rock it!



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The woman behind **MOVING THE PFIZER VACCINE**

Bridget Barnard is Pfizer's Supply Chain Director for Sub-Saharan Africa. Speaking to SAPICS (The Professional Body for Supply Chain Management), for a Women's Month initiative that shared messages from inspiring women who are making their mark in the once male dominated supply chain profession, Barnard humbly noted that her most recent success story was to facilitate the logistics and supply of the COVID-19 vaccine into Sub-Saharan Africa.

To date, more than eight million doses of Pfizer's life-saving vaccine have been administered in South Africa. As a member of the South African chapter of the International Association of Public Health Logisticians (IAPHL), which SAPICS

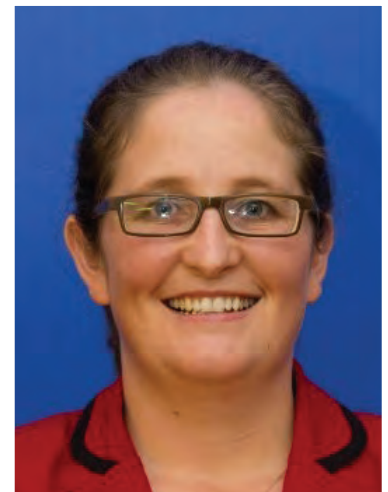
has partnered with, Barnard is also making a vital contribution to professionalism and community in South African public health supply chains with the objective of improving the availability of healthcare supplies and medicines.

Reflecting on her role in the vaccine roll out, Barnard says: "The key to success was one team, a clear strategy and an aligned, focused vision. That vision is bringing breakthroughs to patients' lives. It was a new learning for a cross functional team in a complex matrix environment to work collaboratively and with speed to ensure efficient supply on time.

"While the challenges were many, the outcome is so fulfilling - to impact and make a difference in patients' lives. Individual agility, organisational agility and

Vaccination courtesy Trucking Wellness

◀ *FleetWatch* Editor, Patrick O'Leary gets his second Pfizer vaccine administered by a Trucking Wellness nursing sister at a project run by Trucking Wellness and the Super Group in July where over 1 540 Super Group staff were vaccinated on site over a seven day period. It's thanks to people like Bridget Barnard, Pfizer's Supply Chain Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, that the vaccines are available.



▲ Bridget Barnard, Pfizer's Supply Chain Director for Sub-Saharan Africa. It's thanks to this wonderful lady that millions of us in South Africa have had our Pfizer jabs. *FleetWatch* salutes you!

communication has been a core capability change that I have experienced."

Looking back to the start of her career path, Barnard says she started out in the supply chain field as a Kardex Clerk with a steel company in 1993. "I was young and naïve about industries and my career. All I did in my first position was manually capture stock coming in and stock going out on a card.

LOGISTICS COVID-19

The most innovative application in this job was using different colours; red for outgoing stock and green for incoming stock.

"Times have certainly changed and today there are applications, software, and infrastructure to support this and more in the supply chain management area. As I navigated my work experiences with other companies, my passion for supply chain management grew and I decided to complete my post graduate degree in Supply Chain Management. I haven't look back since."

Her first job in the pharmaceutical industry was an inventory controller. Barnard then moved to logistics and customer service management. "This brought new responsibilities to ensure the efficient inbound and outbound movement of stock for the private and public sectors. Later I moved to demand planning and started managing multiple portfolios, including innovative medicines, consumer health, animal health, and nutrition. Working in demand planning was really my comfort zone and still is today, because of the stakeholder engagement. I would say demand planning is a real passion of mine."

She then stepped into a role as a Market Lead for Southern Africa, or the position more commonly known as a Supply Chain Manager. "I was responsible for demand planning and logistics in this role. Finally, I took up my current role as Supply Chain Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, where I am responsible for some 43 countries in Africa with a multitude of complexities and diversity. I am responsible for all the logistics, customer service and demand planning activities in my organisation. I know I am fulfilling my purpose, so it's not just a job. I thoroughly enjoy my role due to the diversity and variety I must manage on a day-to-day basis."

Barnard has seen some significant changes in the supply chain profession over the years, from its increasing importance and recognition as a strategic business

function to more women being employed in the profession.

"At the start of my career, supply chain management was accepted as an operational function. Today, supply chain issues play a key role in informing sound business decisions. Today, particularly in the pharmaceutical industry, the supply chain function is a key contributor to shaping organisational direction, impact and success, and supply chain executives sit at the leadership table."

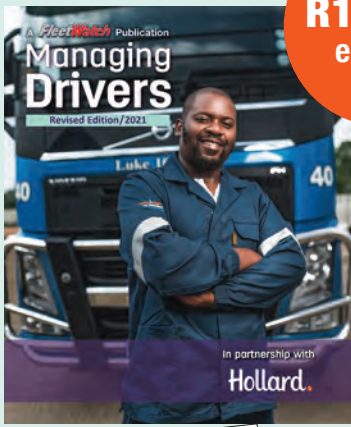
"Over the past decade, Pfizer has actively ensured that women are well-represented in its employee pool. Presently, of the more than 200 people employed by Pfizer South Africa, 149 are female, so women constitute 67% of the total workforce. Pfizer South Africa has ensured that women are well-represented at the executive management level. To date, of the 15 executive managers at Pfizer South Africa, 10 are women, so we also have 67% female representation among executives."

Barnard is optimistic about the future of supply chains and the profession beyond the COVID-19 crisis. "We've already adapted to an environment where we needed to review our network for risks that became more evident due to the many constraints we saw, such as trade restrictions, shortages of medicines, switches in the medicines needed and the slowdown of economies."

"Resilience is and will continue to be a key focus area for supply chains in the future. We may see our supply chains getting shorter or we may need to move from a single sourcing strategy to a multisource strategy, to ensure supply."

From all of us at FleetWatch, we salute you Bridget Barnard for the sterling work you have done during one of the most disruptive times in our history. It is because of you and your team that I, for one, am able to get around with a little more peace of mind. Why? Because I've had my two Pfizer jobs. Thanks a mil. □

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EXCELLENCE AWARDS MANUFACTURERS

Congratulations to Hino South Africa on being awarded its third Platinum Award in the National Automobile Dealers' Association (NADA) annual Dealer Satisfaction Index (DSI) survey.

The survey, now in its 25th year, was not conducted last year due to the COVID-10 pandemic. The commercial vehicle survey was introduced in 2008 when the highest score was 78%.

Hino previously won the highest rating in this survey - in 2017 - and repeated the feat in 2019. Hino scored 86.8% in 2021 which was 6.2% above the score of the runner-up and scored 85.4% in 2017 and 86.1% in 2019, as well as 83.8% (Gold) in the intervening year. It's been a consistent run for Hino.

The NADA DSI survey monitors the health of the relationship between dealers and their respective manufacturers or distributors and this year, 39 brands were independently researched by Lightstone Auto, which has conducted this in-depth survey since the inception of the awards in 1996. There were 169 responses from commercial vehicle dealerships this year.

The awards are made according to a calculation from a scorecard with many questions, which are given various weightings in terms of importance. The Platinum tier was introduced in 2017 to reward brands achieving a score of 85% or more.

"We are enormously proud of this Platinum Award achievement



Hino wins third NADA award

◀ The smile says it all... Pieter Klerck, general manager of Hino South Africa. And it's no wonder it is so broad as there's a lot for Hino to be proud of.

for the third time in four surveys as it underlines the on-going success of Hino's international Total Support strategy. This strategy involves building strong, meaningful and lasting relationships between Hino Motors in Japan, our dealers, suppliers, our local head office in Sandton and most importantly, our customers," says Pieter Klerck, General Manager of Hino SA.

He adds that this latest accolade follows Hino's long-running high placings in the quarterly DATA Track Comparative Truck Survey, which is an independent customer satisfaction survey used since 1989 as a benchmark for local truck owners and operators. This survey uses detailed interviews with major fleet operations regarding levels of sales, technical service and parts supply.

"In addition, Hino dealers made a clean sweep of the top three positions in the commercial vehicle category at the annual MSX (previously Sewells) NADA Business of the Year (BOTY) awards which were announced earlier this year. This survey was in its 23rd year and honours the exceptional performance of managers at automotive dealerships in South Africa," adds Klerck.

There's a lot for Hino to be proud of. □

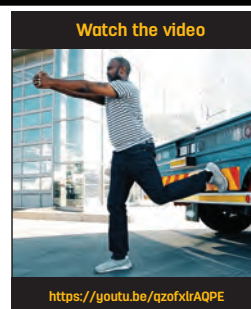


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OPEN LETTER
FROM LOGICO LOGISTICS



**by Clint
Brook,
MD,
Logico
Logistics**

Why do we transport for miniscule margins?

The following is a letter received from Clint Brook, MD of Logico Logistics. With his permission, FleetWatch is publishing it as an open letter to the industry as he touches on a very topical and sore point, namely, the low margins being achieved by transporters in the trucking environment. Read what he has to say and feel free to put forward your thoughts on the subject. Responses and comments can be emailed to the Editor of FleetWatch at fleetwatch@pixie.co.za.

I cast my mind back about 20 years and reminisce about the days when transport was lucrative and an almost elite industry. This was the era of an abundance of medium to large privately owned transport companies dotted around the map serving industry well and creating a healthy and competitive environment.

The benefits of this healthy model were far reaching: safer roads, rested drivers, reduced claims as well as reduced mileage, accidents, and hijackings. All this was the outcome of more realistic rates taking away the need to sweat assets to make a miniscule margin. The economy was far healthier in those days and as a result, the hijacking threat coupled with morally challenged staff was of insignificant risk.

The economy certainly has played a role. However, I argue that it's not the primary influencer. One needs to consider the risk and reward spectrum - a widely used measure for common sense business decisions. Let's look at the common N3 Durban-Johannesburg corridor.

Using round numbers, the average transporter loads for R10 000. The likely margin on this is around 5%. Your asset value (truck/trailer) to execute the load is around R2.5-million. The load value is likely R1.5-million.

In an instance where you're hijacked and you recover your assets only and lose R1.5 million of load, your risk/reward ratio is 1:0.00033. If you lose everything, like

we see when units are taken cross border or get burnt which is now the 'national protest of choice', the ratio is 1:0.000125. Strategists suggest the ideal risk/reward ratio to be around 1:3. So why do we transport for miniscule margins?

The answer to this question is surprisingly obvious. It is because we have allowed this to happen to ourselves! One may argue that prices are driven down by operators that run illegal and unroadworthy rigs; or that corporate clients award contracts/loads to the cheapest competitor. These are true factors but ultimately, we have allowed this to happen.

Why do we participate in reverse auctions? Why do we allow below cost rates out of non-metro areas? Why do we cut each other's throats on on-line load platforms designed to benefit the customer only? And why do we do this for ratios that start at the third decimal place?

The answer seems glaringly obvious to me but would take an enormous amount of courage and cohesion from the greater transport community to affect. Writing this carries its own risk but I, for one, am growing increasingly frustrated. What can transporters do to correct this? I look forward to your informed responses.

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