

# FleetWatch

EMag Vol 89 / 2025

South Africa's Leading Online Trucking Magazine

**Financing  
trucks**  
Exploring  
options

**Defining a  
professional  
truck  
driver**



**Everstar  
celebrates  
10 000<sup>th</sup>  
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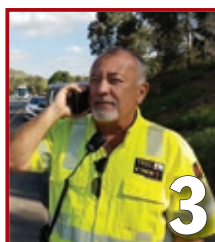


## HINO ALL THE WAY



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# We pay tribute to a Road Safety Champion

Philip Hull (1955 - 2025)



## Thanks for the memories

I find it difficult looking at my phone and realising that never again will the name Philip Hull show up on the screen as an incoming call. For years that name would pop up at least three to four times a week - at all times of the day or night. And that was aside from the calls I'd make to him.

Philip - or Philipino as I called him - and I would chat often, for we had a lot to share, not just about road safety issues for which he was the go-to man in South Africa but about uuum, well everything. I read once that true friends are able to laugh easily together. And heck, did we laugh easily. Mind you, we also disagreed on certain issues and certain people. When that happened, I'd rant, Phil would calmly reason. Over all the years we were mates, I never once heard him bad-mouth anyone. Not once. He always found the good in people. That was his way.

I was privileged to spend many hours with Phil and his team on Van Reenen's Pass over the years and despite him having to deal with hundreds of horrendous accident scenes, that was his 'Happy Place'. It was there that his true nature of caring, giving and spreading love and kindness flourished. Phil saved the lives of hundreds of people over those years but his kindness spread to every corner of this country through the many lives he touched.

My wife and three kids loved him so much, seeing him as part of our family. And he was. He loved my kids as if they were his own - and they loved him right back. So many memories, each one good. That's what we will carry forward. The time has come to delete Phil's number from my phone but he will never be removed from my and our hearts. Marilyn and the girls, we with you - now and always. Cheers Philipino. Thanks for the memories. Luvya always.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1I0WGgiC7rc>

**Patrick O'Leary and family.**  
**Editor, FleetWatch**

**I'll always remember Phil** for the way he made people feel. He had an ability to make the people around him feel safe, giving us a sense that no matter what was going on around us, everything would be okay. I'll always remember the specific moment this came alive for me. We were driving home as a family from our beach holiday in KZN and unfortunately we got held up in traffic due to an accident heading up Van Reenen's pass. Phil was on the scene. As we approached, my dad, as he always does, jumped out, donned his yellow road safety jacket and walked straight ahead to the scene to capture the story. My brother got out to hold an umbrella over some of the passengers impacted while my mom, sister and I waited in the car. It looked like chaos but in the distance, I saw Phil's face emerge, and there was a presence of calmness, kindness and care that so easily surrounds him as he did his work. Phil was meant to be on the road with people who needed his presence in moment of terror. What a blessing. Whenever I saw or spoke to Phil, he would remind me how much he loved my family, but Phil was and always will be family. ❤️

**Skye O'Leary**



**We were shocked** and deeply saddened by the untimely passing of Philip Hull.

We will remember him as a kind, generous and selfless man who was always willing to put others first. He had a way of uplifting people, having something kind to say and almost always had a broad smile on his face. The sacrifices he made, especially for total strangers, were humbling.

He was a friend, colleague and mentor to so many, a road safety champion and a legend on the N3 in Van Reenen's Pass where he volunteered for 42 years assisting as a first responder at countless crash scenes and working on numerous road safety projects. He was also touched by the people living in the areas where he worked and he initiated multiple fund raisers for their benefit.

His compassion, dedication, commitment and vast experience was unmatched and his absence will leave a large void which is unlikely to be filled. Thank you to everyone over the four decades who saw the value in what he was doing, shared his dream and supported him to assist others in their time of desperate need.

It's has been an honour and a privilege to serve alongside Philip and his team's over the years. We can only hope that we can continue in a way that would make him proud.

**Nick Dollman**  
**Volunteer Rescue Team**





# We pay tribute to a Road Safety Champion

Philip Hull (1955 - 2025)



**Phil and I had a deal** – while in rehab for Guillaine Barre Syndrome he had driven from Pretoria just to spend an hour with me before driving all the way home again – that we would celebrate his birthday on 3rd September and I would be walking properly.

So we didn't make the 3rd but the 5th instead. We met at the little church at Van Reenen and had a good feed thanks to Geraldine. I got to spend the best part of Friday with Phil discussing the help centre's future now that he had secured "tenure" from the new owner of the property. To say that the excitement was infectious is putting it mildly. I think the dream of re-establishing a base of operations properly manned was what he was aiming for again.

It's incredibly difficult to summarise a friendship, brother in arms of over 40 years in just a few paragraphs. When Glennis was diagnosed with cancer Phil was the first call I made to. He'd call me once a week to check in. When good days turned bad, invariably Phil would just listen. I think he would've made a fantastic Pooh-bear in the 100 acre wood.

Phil leaves this world a much poorer place for his passing. I certainly will remember his kindness, his calculated opinions and fondness for a debate. A man with good principles who didn't easily back down. Humble, wise and happy to see others succeed.

I remember when Phil got married – Marilyn brought Byron the cheetah along to make sure he didn't run! Phil was so proud of his family – all of them were number one in his eyes. A very lucky and deserving man.

My brother.

And he always out drove me with his 5 iron.

**Gary Ronald**  
MPI Branch Manager KZN



**Philip was always the perfect** gentleman, and over the years always kept in contact.

He was hugely dedicated to the road safety cause. We worked with him for many years on the Van Reenen's Pass project (plus others), and were one of the founding members of the then Road Safety Foundation – driven by him. South Africa will be the poorer for his loss."

**Philip Lutz**  
Monroe Product Manager - Aftermarket Ride Control



**Philip was one of the** friendliest and kindest people I have encountered in my life.

I remember my first Honda launch in Cape Town, where I was not feeling great. I met the doc, and he consulted and took care of me for two days and even followed up with me a few days after.

His legacy, away from what he was known for as an advocate for safer roads, the Doc will always be remembered by me for being relatable, caring, a proper car enthusiast, but more importantly, a friend I didn't know I needed.

**Pritesh Ruthun**

**“He was hugely dedicated to the road safety cause.”**

**His proud legacy.** A man of few words, led by his actions, a gentle and compassionate soul. Able to look back on life with pride and know that he helped and saved countless people. Phil took the time to message and call and check on others, including myself in tough times, the true nature of a gentleman, a steward and an incredible being.

Perhaps gone, but never forgotten, etched in memorial.

**Craig Proctor-Parker**  
[www.accidentspecialist.co.za](http://www.accidentspecialist.co.za)



**“One of the friendliest & kindest people**



# We pay tribute to a Road Safety Champion

Philip Hull (1955 - 2025)



## A light on Van Reenen Pass

**There are those** among us who, where others see danger, see only the call to help. Philip Hull was such a person—a true hero whose life was defined by ‘running toward the fire when many others would head in the opposite direction’. For more than forty years, Philip, the founder of Community Medical Services (CMS), dedicated himself to saving lives on the N3 Toll Route, particularly along Van Reenen Pass.

Philip never sought attention or acclaim, but his legacy is impossible to overlook. Through CMS, he established what is considered the longest-standing community rescue initiative of its kind in South Africa. His decades of service as a paramedic, particularly during peak traffic periods on the N3 Toll Route, and during some of the most treacherous weather conditions on Van Reenen Pass, made him an expert in road safety, and advanced life support.

He understood that road safety requires not only swift reactions, but also careful anticipation—being prepared for what might come and having the strategies and courage to act decisively when called upon to do so.

More than just knowledge, Philip brought wisdom, intuition, and a calm resolve to every crisis. Philip’s courage and steadfastness inspired those who worked with him. His service and compassion extended beyond the roadside to various rural communities adjacent to the N3 Toll Route. He championed projects to support vulnerable children and families, rallying donations and distributing thousands of educational gifts and essential food items to those who needed hope most.

His life was one of dedication and service. He was a caregiver, mentor and friend who acted with humility, selflessness, and an unwavering commitment to others. Philip was a true gentleman, carrying pride and passion for his work and fellow human beings. He nurtured his relationships with care, treating everyone with respect and genuine kindness, while freely sharing his knowledge, warmth, and laughter.

In his lifetime Philip rescued countless lives. This is perhaps the highest honour that could be bestowed upon him. His legacy will endure—in the many lives he saved, the communities he uplifted, and the acts of courage and compassion he displayed, particularly along the N3 Toll Route.

**Philip Hull: bringer of light, saver of lives.  
N3TC, and all who travel this road, salute you.  
Thank you for your service.**



**“He brought wisdom, intuition, and a calm resolve to every crisis.”**

**Growing up alongside my father,** Patrick O’Leary, I was first introduced to Phil not through work, but as a friend, of his when I was still a late teen. From the very beginning, Phil showed nothing but love and compassion throughout every stage of my life.

I always knew that if anything went wrong, I could call Phil and he would be there without hesitation. He taught me to live with open arms, to understand the people around me, and to lead with compassion.

Phil had an extraordinary gift: he could meet people at their lowest, at their most broken, and still somehow bring a smile to their faces. That’s the kind of love and kindness this world so desperately needs.

I hope my son grows up to carry the same compassion and warmth that Phil so freely gave. His hugs were the best, his presence a comfort, and his heart a gift to us all.

We will miss you greatly, Phil. You are loved wholeheartedly and will never be forgotten.

**Kylie Saunders**

**“His hugs were the best, his presence a comfort, and his heart a gift to us all.”**



# We pay tribute to a Road Safety Champion

Philip Hull (1955 - 2025)



**The Road Freight Association is shocked** and saddened to learn of the passing of Philip Hull. He spent most of his life looking after others in an area far from his home and workplace. He did this at times when most South Africans were enjoying holidays or travelling to see loved ones.

Philip was a familiar and constant presence for many years, helping travellers on the N3, especially near Van Reenen's Pass, which connects the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal.

He was a key part of an old organisation called CARS, the Committee for Active Road Safety. We remember Philip and his small group of volunteers working from a simple shed next to a garage at the top of Van Reenen's Pass. From there, they would go out in either direction, trying to save lives by being there during that crucial "platinum half hour" to prevent the loss of loved ones.

Philip will always be remembered in our hearts as a man who gave more than he ever took. He had a way of multiplying any donations he received, turning them into projects that gave back even more to communities.

Rest easy, my friend. You have truly earned it. We will miss your constant smile, your positivity, and your open, 'can-do' approach to everything that happened on the road. We know many people helped you, but you were the face of immediate response, road safety, and a sense of calm reality on the N3. Sleep easy, my friend. Our deepest condolences go out to your family and children. One has to wonder if the N3, or any of the places where you worked for road safety, will ever be the same.

From the South African trucking industry, we thank you for everything you did. We thank you for being there when we needed you and for co-ordinating the things we did, because you were always on the ground.

We will miss you, my friend. Rest in peace.

Gavin Kelly,  
CEO of the Road Freight Association



## A man who gave more than he ever took.

**It is with profound** sadness that we mark the passing of Philip Hull, a respected figure whose contributions left a lasting and positive imprint on the commercial vehicle industry and the broader field of road safety.

Philip's dedication, insight, and unwavering commitment to progress helped shape safer and more efficient transport systems. His legacy is reflected not only in the advancements he championed but also in the many lives he touched through his work.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and all who had the privilege of working alongside him. May his memory be a source of comfort and pride, and may his legacy continue to inspire and drive road safety forward.

DTSA Management

DAIMLER TRUCK  
Southern Africa

### ***I am absolutely devastated.***

There are only a very few people about whom I would say he (or she) was one-in-a-million. Philip Hull was most definitely one of them.

Self-effacing and self-sacrificing, immensely capable, generous to a fault, utterly dedicated to his calling to save lives. Especially the lives of children. A man of fierce integrity, deep thought and compelling vision. Single-minded about making a meaningful difference.

His Community Medical Services leadership was calm, clear-headed and decisive. When he spoke, everyone listened. His team-building skills were exceptional. Not as a result of fanfare or rhetoric, but an uncanny ability to attract and lead like-minded individuals who had no thought for themselves. Only a desire to serve a noble calling, saving lives.

I had the immense privilege of spending many hours patrolling with Philip. Sometimes we were quiet. Always a companionable quiet, no need to talk simply for the sake of talking. But most of the time we chatted about anything and everything. Philip had deep-seated views on what was right and wrong, what mattered and what did not. He was a soul-brother, whose thoughts and motivations resonated deeply with me. We seldom differed in opinion, except as to the definition of a hot curry.

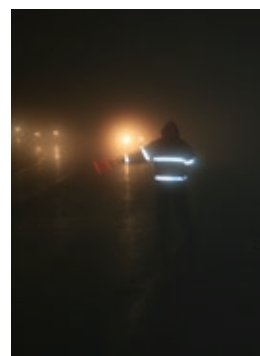
And when a call came through notifying an emergency, Philip responded immediately and unhesitatingly. Always with the same quiet, calm demeanour, regardless of the weather, time of day or circumstances. Except once, Philip in the process so impressing me with the capability of a Land Rover Discovery that I felt obliged to go out and buy one.

Van Reenen in the middle of a winter night, with fog, occasional snow, heavy traffic and a crash or other emergency (read broken down vehicle on a blind corner) is not for the faint-hearted. Yet Philip spent countless days and nights every year, for 42 years, taking the full weight of responsibility for any and every eventuality on "The Hill". He turned the humble Help Centre into a fortress of team resilience and camaraderie. Even after the most shocking of incidents.

Yes, he did burn out. Yet somehow, somehow, found the resolve and strength of character to keep going. His faithfulness, even in the face of immense adversity, will never cease to astonish me.

When he needed time out, Philip went alone to a quiet spot overlooking Van Reenen. It is to that spot I will go to pay my final respects to this giant of a man, who exemplified everything of the best in humankind. Yet I know I will struggle to bring closure. My respect and love for him, for everything he stood for, is simply too great.

Con Roux







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# Ever Star Industries produces 10 000<sup>th</sup> Powerstar, Plus PowerTech Telematics system



↑ This unit, the 10 000<sup>th</sup> Powerstar truck to come off the assembly line at Ever Star Industries' Pietermaritzburg plant, will be auctioned through the dealer network with all profits donated to a charity of the buyer's choice.

**IN A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT,** Ever Star Industries (ESI) has proudly announced the completion of its 10 000<sup>th</sup> Powerstar truck at the Pietermaritzburg assembly plant. This milestone is a testament to the dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to excellence demonstrated by the entire ESI team.

The journey to this significant milestone began in 2006, a year that laid the foundation for what would become a story of perseverance and innovation. Despite facing numerous challenges, including limited sales opportunities and a single production line, the team at ESI never wavered in their commitment to quality and innovation. Each truck that rolled off the line was a product of careful planning, skilled craftsmanship, and meticulous attention to detail.

The achievement of assembling 10 000 trucks is not merely a number; it represents countless hours of hard work, creative problem-solving and the camaraderie that has grown among the team members over the years. This milestone is a celebration of the steady, patient progress that has defined ESI's path, guided by strategic planning and sheer determination.

To mark this momentous occasion, ESI has decided to put the 10,000<sup>th</sup> Powerstar truck up for auction within its dealer group. In a gesture of goodwill, all profits from the auction will be donated to a charity of the buyer's choice. This initiative reflects ESI's commitment to giving back to the community and supporting worthy causes.

The day's celebration was also marked by the introduction of the PowerTech system, a collaboration between Khulu Digital and ESI. PowerTech is a tracking system designed for the simpler engine trucks and will provide a host of features which will benefit every operator as it gets added to each vehicle that rolls off the assembly line at no extra cost to the end user.

As ESI looks to the future, this milestone serves as both a reward and an inspiration. The company has proven what is possible when determination meets teamwork, and it stands as a shining example of what can be accomplished with focus, integrity, and unity of purpose.

Congratulations to the Pietermaritzburg assembly plant team on this outstanding accomplishment. Here's to the next 10 000 trucks and the continued success of Ever Star Industries."





[www.everstarindustries.com](http://www.everstarindustries.com)



↑ Every milestone reached is a testament to bold leadership, clear vision, and collective drive.



↑ The team had every reason to celebrate the 10 000<sup>th</sup> Powerstar unit to be assembled at the Pietermaritzburg plant.

**From a single line in 2006 to a fully connected fleet today – a testament to persistence, innovation and commitment**



↑ ESI proudly unveiled its PowerTech telematics system, marking a significant leap forward in fleet management technology. Designed to put real-time vehicle insights and data directly into the hands of the fleet operators.







# World-class rigs on potholed roads

**The handover in August of the first 20 of a total order of 50 DAF XF 480 Premium truck tractors from Babcock Transport Solutions, importer and supplier of DAF Trucks for southern Africa, to VR Cargo brings the total number of DAF models in the VR Cargo fleet to 299. This makes VR Cargo the largest single operator of DAF trucks in southern Africa writes Patrick O'Leary.**

**A**rriving at Mbombela Stadium for the celebratory function, one felt an immediate sense of déjà vu. The braai fires had been lit, the drinks counter was manned and present at the handover function were senior management from DAF Trucks as well as VR Cargo along with a number of staff members from VR Cargo.

Over-riding all this, however, was a precisely lined-up row of 20 DAF XF 480 Premium truck-tractors linked to shiny bright red Afrit trailers. Resplendent is the only way to describe the display.

The déjà vu sense of a memory from the past was real for it was the same scene as had been played out back in October 2021 - four

▲ The precise line-up of the first 20 of a total order of 50 DAF 480 XF Premium truck tractors demonstrates the attention to detail VR Cargo pays to all aspects of its operations.

years ago - when VR Cargo took delivery of its first DAF trucks - 80 of them in fact. This was a break-through order for Babcock Transport Solutions, not only in the size of the order but more by the fact that it had penetrated a fleet which previously ran a competitive European brand.

Interviewing Marius Barnard, MD of DAF Trucks, at that occasion, he was over the moon that DAF had managed to break into this





▲ Teamwork at its best. The DAF team headed by Managing Director Marius Barnard (far right) in front of the new rigs with Shaun Van Rooyen (center white shirt), managing director of VR Cargo. It was a proud day for all.



▲ The sun is going down on another day in trucking and Shaun Van Rooyen, Managing Director of VR Cargo, takes time to chat to *FleetWatch*. "We've got strong systems, good people and a belief in doing things right."



◀ Operations Manager of VR Cargo, Dane Heyneke, took time out the morning after the handover function to show *FleetWatch* round some of the operations at the head-office depot. The systems and processes that are in place make for a flawless operation.



▲ The VR Cargo fleet is a Road Transport Management System (RTMS) accredited company. All the rigs handed over on the day are RTMS certified, PBS Approved combinations.

fleet. However, he was nervous stating that he would have preferred another six or so months of preparation before delivery.

Two months prior to this, Barnard had visited VR Cargo and in his own words "did not expect the level of professionalism I saw in the company. I knew what we could offer and realised that we would have to up our game to get onto par with the customer's expectations in terms of our services and support."

The next two months prior to the 80-truck handover saw him implementing systems and processes that would match VR Cargo's requirements, not least of which was a superior after-sales service structure. "We were determined to give the support a business like this required and lifted our game a lot over those two months."

I have often said that trucking is about relationships rather than transactions and the fact that Barnard was prepared to admit that DAF had work to do, combined with the fact that, despite this, VR Cargo was prepared to invest in an 80-strong DAF fleet, spoke volumes for the foundation on which the relationship would grow - and grow it has.

So, what has been the main impetus to solidify the growth and the relationship? Let's hear it from Dane Heyneke, Operations Manager of VR Cargo. "In our operation, aftersales support is critical and the support we have been getting from Babcock has been a game changer. You can always press on the button and they are there to assist in a professional way. It's a pleasure doing business with them," says Heyneke. ▶ 12

► 11 This came as music to the ears of Mark Gavin, Sales Director for DAF trucks, who said that it's not the sales guy who sells 299 trucks. "The sales guy sells the first one but after that, it's the level of service and back-up that sells the rest."

This is such an important point Gavin makes and serves to endorse the importance of the 'relationship' nature of trucking. You're not there for a once-off sale like happens in the car sector. The first sale in trucking can get you into a new fleet but it's how you service and build the relationship with the client after the sale that will build a lifetime partnership of growth.

This point is stressed by Barnard when he says: "We value our relationship with VR Cargo and have huge respect for the people and the company. It's a privilege to be associated with them."

Note those two statements: "It's a pleasure doing business with them," from Heyneke and "it's a privilege to be associated with them," from Barnard. There's mutual respect on both sides. The beauty of such a relationship is that not only does it build a good business structure but also builds friendships - and what more can one ask for.

## The invisible backbone of the economy

With the handover celebrations completed, I took time out to chat to Shaun van Rooyen, managing director of VR Cargo about the environment in which these stunning rigs will be operating. He had some insightful thoughts which most transporters would agree on.

Let's face it, when the conversation turns to trucks in South Africa, it's usually complaints that rise to the surface: too many on the roads, too much damage to the tarmac, too many accidents. Rarely do we hear acknowledgment of the lifeblood role the transport industry plays in keeping the economy running. For Van Rooyen, the story is about systems, standards and survival in a tough environment.

Van Rooyen is proud of the professional image his fleet projects on the roads but insists it's not



## WATCH THE VIDEO



Mark Gavin, DAF explain what sells trucks  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcAya3Tr-c0>

about shiny paintwork. "It's just the way we operate," he says. "We've got strong systems, good people and a belief in doing things right. That's the result you see on the road."

## Fighting for reputation

For him, safety is non-negotiable. "Our responsibility is to make sure we've got a safe truck on the road. Miss a service and it's a problem. That's not the boss pushing down pressure - it's the culture we've built at VR Cargo. Every team member takes ownership," he says.

Despite trucking being the backbone of South Africa's logistics network - especially in the wake of rail's collapse - Van Rooyen believes the industry is largely ignored for the critical role it plays in the economy. VR Cargo moves commodities that earn the country

vital revenue. Yet transporters receive little recognition for their contribution.

"We are definitely ignored," he says bluntly. "If the roads were better and the money went where it's supposed to, transporters wouldn't be blamed for damaged roads. Instead, government fails on infrastructure and we carry the can."

The frustrations run deep - and it's not only the roads that cause this. In July alone, VR Cargo paid R1.4-million in license fees. Yet, when staff went to collect the licenses, the printers were broken or the paper had run out. "We've paid, but we can't get the licenses and then our trucks get stopped and fined for being unlicensed. Those are the kinds of battles we face every day."

The sales guy sells the first truck,  
after that, it's the level of service  
and back-up that sells the rest.

Mark Gavin  
 Sales Director, DAF



On top of bureaucratic failures, it's the poor road conditions that really hammers transporters. The R36 between Lydenburg and Machadodorp, for instance, is "not a road," Van Rooyen says. "It's the worst it's ever been. And now I have to put brand new R4-million rigs on that road. Then I get fines for cracked windscreens, even though the damage comes from those very roads."

### **The breaking point for many operators**

For Van Rooyen, these pressures are relentless. "We're trying to maintain the highest standards but so much is standing against us. If you don't have the resources and the mindset to fight it, you stop spending on your assets. That's when maintenance gets skipped. That's why so many operators end up failing."

The irony is that while the public often sees trucks as dangerous and unwelcome, without them the country would grind to a halt. "Without trucks, nothing moves. Fuel doesn't move, food doesn't move, commodities don't move, people don't move. This country doesn't move without trucks," he rightfully says.

For him, the solution starts and ends with infrastructure. "If South African transporters had better infrastructure, the perception would change," he argues. "Vehicles would suffer less damage, transporters would spend less on repairs and they'd be able to reinvest into their rigs."

Asked whether he would rather have recognition or working infrastructure, Van Rooyen doesn't hesitate. "I'll take the infrastructure. Recognition can come later. We as transporters already know our worth. But fix the infrastructure - that's recognition enough."

### **Pride in an unloved industry**

Despite the hardships, Van Rooyen is unequivocal about his pride in being a trucker. "I've been doing this for 23 years. I can't see myself doing anything else. Yes, the perception is negative. But I'm proud because I'm getting it right. That's what makes me proud."

His pride is not just personal - it's about contribution. South Africa's trucks have filled the void left by a broken rail system, keeping the economy afloat through commodity booms and busts. That contribution, Van Rooyen believes,

deserves acknowledgment but more importantly, it deserves roads that are fit for purpose.

"Fix the infrastructure and everything else will follow. That's where the change starts," he says. *FleetWatch* fully agrees - as we know many transporters will too.

Behind every potholed road and every delivery lies an industry under siege but still proud, still essential and still keeping the country alive. Huge congratulations to VR Cargo and to DAF. You do the industry proud. You do the country proud. □

▼ Linking excellence – DAF Truck Tractors to AFRIT side-tippers.



▲ The DAF 480 XF Premium truck tractors are hitched to Afrit trailers with all the bells and whistles fitted for safety and reliability.



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# FleetCam drives Airlink's ground operations to new heights



**FleetWatch is a trucking magazine so why are we talking to Airlink, one of South Africa's most respected regional airlines, about vehicle telematics? After all, when we think fleet telematics, our minds usually jump to long-haul rigs pounding the highways rather than airplanes soaring through the skies. However, FleetWatch editor Patrick O'Leary had a fascinating discussion with Hannes Louw, Compliance and Investigation Officer for Airlink and found that through its vehicle video telematics systems, FleetCam has transformed the risk profile of Airlink's ground vehicle operations on airport aprons to the highest levels of safety and compliance. Read on...**

**S**o much of life happens behind the scenes. Take a flight from Johannesburg to Cape Town, for example. You book your ticket, check in your luggage, board the plane, sip a coffee and nibble a sandwich, then disembark on the other side and head on your way. Easy. Yet out on the apron - the bustling tarmac zone where aircraft are serviced - a world of activity unfolds, carrying both opportunities for excellence and risks for mishap.

This is where FleetCam, a company specialising in vehicle video telematics systems that integrates high-definition cameras with GPS tracking and driver behaviour monitoring, and Airlink have teamed up to make sure that "mishaps" stay out of the picture and only "excellence" makes it through.

Mention Airlink and you think airplanes. However, the company operates a large fleet of vehicles in and around airports - baggage loaders, catering trucks, crew buses, maintenance vehicles - all essential to keeping flights on schedule. But working in the high-pressure, security-sensitive environment

▲ On a busy airport apron, vehicles operate in close proximity to aircraft, other vehicles and ground staff. Mistakes can be costly. With FleetCam, unsafe driving behaviour is quickly identified and corrected.

of an airport apron brings unique challenges: strict safety protocols, potential for theft or pilferage and the constant need to ensure operational efficiency.

Enter FleetCam's technology which, according to Louw, has given Airlink unprecedented visibility over its ground operations. "We can now see exactly what's happening, where it's happening, and who's involved - in real time," he explains.

In the world of aviation, safety, security and precision aren't optional extras - they're the foundations of the business. For Airlink, those principles don't just apply in the air. On the ground, an army of support vehicles work behind the scenes to keep every flight running smoothly. But like any busy hub of activity, ground operations face challenges: pilferage of perishable food, gaps in cargo security, occasional lapses in compliance, and the everyday



risks of accidents in a fast-moving environment.

This is where FleetCam has given Airlink's compliance team a new set of eyes across their entire ground fleet. And according to Louw, those eyes have been game-changers. "We've gone from having limited visibility to having total visibility over our operations," says Louw. "FleetCam hasn't just helped us respond to issues - it's helped us prevent them."

### **From problem-solving to prevention**

Before FleetCam, many incidents had to be investigated after the fact - often relying on partial witness accounts, incomplete manual records or perhaps footage from fixed CCTV cameras that didn't always capture the full story. Now, every Airlink ground vehicle equipped with FleetCam carries its own moving, intelligent surveillance system.

The hardware includes multiple high-definition cameras, facing both

inward and outward, along with GPS tracking and event-triggered recording. The result is a rich stream of visual and telematics data that allows the compliance team to see exactly what happened, where, and when. And that visibility isn't just about catching wrongdoing. It's about changing behaviour.

"We've noticed that when staff know they're being monitored, they tend to follow procedures more consistently," says Louw. "It's improved everything from safe driving habits to how cargo is handled."

### **Cutting Pilferage, Securing Cargo**

One of the most immediate benefits has been in the fight against pilferage, particularly of perishable catering items destined for flights. Airlines work to tight schedules and strict quality controls for on-board meals and any unauthorised loss can cause disruption, cost and reputational damage.

Since FleetCam's introduction,

those incidents have dropped sharply. Drivers know their catering runs are monitored in real time. Cameras record every stop, every door opening and every moment food is loaded or unloaded.

The same goes for cargo security. Whether it's high-value goods or urgent documents, FleetCam provides a verified chain of custody. Any deviation from a route, unexplained stop, or improper handling is flagged instantly.

"If there's an issue with a delivery, we can review the footage live as it's happening," says Louw. "It's no longer about asking what happened? We can see exactly what happened."

### **Compliance made easier**

Airlink's compliance standards are already rigorous, covering everything from driver conduct and vehicle safety checks to adherence with airside security protocols. But enforcing those standards across a large and varied fleet can be challenging. ▶ 17

**With Fleetcam, we can now see exactly **what** is happening, **where** it is happening and **who's** involved – **real time**.**

**Hannes Louw,**  
Compliance and Investigation  
Officer, Airlink





▼ FleetCam is living up to its service promise at Airlink of providing Real-Time Vehicle Video telematics. "It's no longer about asking what happened? We can see exactly what happened," says Hannes Louw,

▲ Every Airlink ground vehicle equipped with FleetCam carries its own moving, intelligent surveillance system. One of the most immediate benefits has been in the fight against pilferage, particularly of perishable catering items destined for flights.

► 17 FleetCam has turned that process from reactive policing into proactive management. The system can be set to trigger alerts for specific events - such as speeding, harsh braking, or unauthorised stops - allowing supervisors to address issues in real time. This means fewer minor infringements escalating into major incidents, and a smoother path to passing internal and external audits.

"If we are asked for proof that a certain protocol is followed, we can show clear, time-stamped video evidence," says Louw. "It's indisputable."

Safety is another major win. On a busy airport apron, vehicles operate in close proximity to aircraft, other vehicles and ground staff. Mistakes can be costly.

With FleetCam, unsafe driving behaviour is quickly identified and corrected. The presence of cameras encourages drivers to maintain safe speeds, follow correct routes, and remain alert, especially in high-risk areas near aircraft engines or refueling points. In the event of an incident, video evidence can be used for

training, showing exactly what went wrong and how it can be avoided in future.

## Beyond the vehicles

While FleetCam was introduced for Airlink's ground vehicles, its influence has extended further. The data and insights gathered are now being used to refine training programmes, improve workflow planning and even strengthen relationships with service providers and partners.

Insurance claims are another area seeing benefits. With irrefutable video evidence, Airlink can more effectively challenge false claims or quickly settle legitimate ones - saving both time and money.

## A cultural shift

Perhaps the most significant impact has been cultural. FleetCam hasn't just added a layer of technology - it's shifted the mindset of the teams on the ground. "When people know there's accountability, they tend to take more pride in their work," says Louw. "The technology

reinforces the idea that every role in this operation matters."

And while some might expect resistance to increased monitoring, Louw says the opposite has been true. "Our teams see it as a tool that protects them as much as it protects the company," he explains. "If there's a dispute about what happened, the video often clears them instantly."

With the success of FleetCam so far, Airlink is looking at ways to expand and enhance the system. "The more we can see, the more we can improve. It's about making sure we're always one step ahead," says Louw.

In aviation, the details matter and in Airlink's ground operations, those details are now visible in high definition, every minute of every day. "If you want to improve safety, compliance and efficiency you need more than rules. You need visibility. FleetCam gives us that - every minute, every vehicle, every trip," concludes Louw.

Talk about a happy partnership and this is it. □

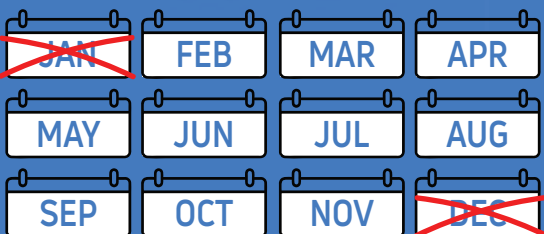




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## Volvo sends a message of strength

**M**edia conferences by Volvo Trucks South Africa have traditionally concentrated heavily on market performance and 'exciting' things to come. However, while this was certainly covered in a recent event, more prominent was what comes after you buy a truck - no doubt because the audience was sprinkled not only with media

but more so with truck operators. And there was no mention of price writes *Patrick O'Leary*.

On the trends side, Mattias Rodier, Chief Financial Officer of Volvo Trucks South Africa, kicked off by sketching out Volvo's international move towards 'green trucking' stating that electric vehicles are part of Volvo's "Three Path Strategy" towards Zero

**"The FH Aero - introduced globally in 2024 - will be coming into South Africa once homologation and test trials have been concluded."**

◀ The Volvo FH in Euro 6 guise. Local assembly of Volvo's Euro 6 models will begin during the first quarter of 2026.

Emissions by 2040. This strategy embraces battery electric, fuel cell electric and combustion engines that run on renewable fuels like green hydrogen, biogas (Bio-LNG) or HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil).

It was then a bit of 'boast' time with Rodeir saying that for the first time ever, Volvo Trucks led Europe as market leader last year with an overall market share in Europe of 19,9% and 56 331 Volvo trucks registered in the region. "Globally, Volvo Trucks increased its market share in 25 countries in 2024," he said. He also highlighted Volvo's safety achievements which align with the company's Zero Accident Vision. But then, it was onto other things which I regarded as being - rightfully since they were there - more directed at customers than at the media.

As is well known, price has been a huge influencing factor in the ▶▶ 22



◀ **Left:** To bring down the 'barrier to entry', Volvo Trucks is also offering its electric trucks as rental units.

◀ **Right:** Since the launch of the first Volvo electric truck locally in 2023, the company has brought in a range of configurations to suit the South African market.



**WATCH THE VIDEO**



**Patrick O'Leary talks electric trucks with Volvo and its customers**



▲ **Clients:** Enjoying a pint of 'green tea' were, from left: Paul van Lingen of Buffelshoek Transport, Mark and Jacques Fourie of Faith Wheels and Leon Lombard of Jackson Transport.

► **DHL:** Marnus van Rooyen, National Fleet Manager at DHL Supply Chain, has bought into the concept of the Volvo battery electric truck. Listen to what he says in the accompanying video.

◄ **Euro 6:** Onica Ndlovu, Director Commercial Offer and Used Trucks at Volvo, spelt out the benefits of Euro 6 such as lower fuel consumption and lower operating costs.



► 21 purchase of new trucks over the past few years with European manufacturers not being able to compete in South Africa against the Chinese when it comes to pricing. Perhaps it was this that then led to people like Jarred Language, Director of Retail Operations South, Chrisjan Els, director of Retail Operations North, Haneef Laher from Volvo Trucks Jet Park and Werner du Toit taking to the podium to go into detail on the back-up and after-sales added-value services offered by Volvo Trucks South Africa across the country.

I saw this as Volvo pushing a reminder to all that there is more than upfront price to take into consideration when buying a truck. It's all about Total Cost of Ownership and thus prominence was given to Volvo's dealership footprint and other services such as Predictive Intervention which, according to Volvo's Werner du Toit, this year up to July, saved over 432 potential breakdowns via Volvo's Uptime Monitoring Centre.

The news of things to come was that Volvo Trucks South Africa

will start local assembly of its Euro 6 trucks during the first quarter of 2026. Also, that the FH Aero - introduced globally in 2024 - will be coming into South Africa once homologation and test trials have been concluded. You can read about these two developments by clicking on this link to a recent *FleetWatch* report. <https://fleetwatch.co.za/fleetwatch-article/volvo-trucks-to-start-local-assembly-of-euro-6-trucks-and-fh-aero-is-coming-soon/>

With accent being heavily placed on electric trucks in the models exhibited at the event, Eric Parry, senior manager of Sustainable Solutions at Volvo Trucks South Africa, also gave an update on the progress being made in the market on Volvo's electric truck models. Two companies currently using these models were present and *FleetWatch* took the opportunity to interview them along with Eric Parry. The video appears alongside this article.

With the many challenges facing the South African truck market - and indeed the global truck market - the main message that came across for me is that Volvo Trucks South Africa

is not scared of these challenges. Let's leave it to Rodeir to put in a nutshell what came across.

"It is fair to say that Volvo operates from a position of strength. We have a very strong product portfolio and offering - and more is coming. We have a broad market and dealer footprint and we have never invested as much as we do today into R&D to develop tomorrow's products and to 'rig' ourselves for the market and competitors that lie ahead." BOOM! □

▼ **The boss and the vellies!**

Mattias Rodier, CFO of Volvo Trucks, has adapted well to local customs, pointing to his new 'Veldskoens' as a sure sign of this. Good man.







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# Daimler Truck makes a huge statement

By Patrick O'Leary

**T**he invitation was headlined “The Daimler Truck Experience – For all who Keep Africa Moving”. Held at the Gerotek testing facility in Pretoria, it was billed as a ‘showcase for Daimler Truck Southern Africa’s (DTSA) advancement in product innovation and transport technology’. While it did all this - plus more - what I came away with as an overall impression was Daimler Truck making a solid statement of strength, traditional values and total commitment to the southern African market in an era of a confusing market reset and global ‘gemors’.

It’s been a long time since *FleetWatch* attended an event where big bucks - and I mean BIG bucks – were spent on getting a message across. Gerotek is a big place and Daimler Truck occupied a lot of that space not just for one day but for a whole week with different audiences attending on each day - media, body builders, dealers, customers and on the last day, staff.

Man, this was like the old days - you know, the pre-historic pre-Covid, pre-Van Riebeeck days when budgets allowed for regular gatherings like this. I was like a kid





## WATCH THE VIDEO



Live demo of Active Brake Assist 6 and Active Side Guard 2. Hold tight.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Cqi1nflBqc>



▲ Key Accounts manager Ludwich Ehlers with the eCanter. The acceleration is amazing.

in a candy store - not only eyeing the delightful 'candy' on offer but getting to taste them as well.

Body language is a powerful thing and there was no doubt in my mind when Maretha Gerber, President and Group CEO of DTSA took to the podium to kick off the day that she and her management team - the full complement of which was there - mean business. They are not buckling to any pressures, be it competing against lower priced Chinese products, political shenanigans, low economic growth, Trump's tariff impacts - the list goes on.



▲ Show of Force, from left: Olaf Petersen, Vice President Sales and Marketing; Ziyad Gaba, Vice President of Customer Service, Parts and Downstream; Maretha Gerber, President and Group CEO of DTSA; Wolf Edmayr, GM, Used Trucks and Buses; and Deon de Vries; GM for Mercedes-Benz Buses.

Perhaps the banner under which she gave her presentation says it all: "Simpler, Faster. Stronger" which is good news for a big corporation like Daimler as the general impression of big corporates held by many is that the wheels turn rather slowly when it comes to decision making.

Gerber outlined five pillars in going forward under this banner: The first is to unlock full potential through growth, scale and efficiency; the second to evolve into a customer centric solutions powerhouse; the third to transform at the speed of 'right'; the fourth to build a lean and effective operating model; and the fifth to foster a performance culture.

Yes, I know, each one of those need detailed analysis but just check this out. "Unlock full potential through growth". Well, while we see Daimler Trucks as a big and powerful group, management obviously feels that the full potential for growth has not yet been fully explored. It will be interesting to see what comes out of 'unlocking' the full potential.

The one I really like is to "evolve into a customer centric solutions powerhouse". Boom! All customers and potential customers will welcome this. After all, the only person that gives a company money is the customer so I guess becoming a "customer centric powerhouse" is the pretty logical way to go. And transporters are no longer looking just to buy a 'lorrie'. They're looking for solutions to their transport needs and requirements which brings

me onto the next thing.

It was Olaf Petersen, Vice President Sales and Marketing for Daimler Trucks Southern Africa, who then went through both Mercedes-Benz and Fuso products and ended up by highlighting Daimler's Value Chain offerings. It's comprehensive and embedded within them are a number of solutions proving that it's no longer just about buying a 'lorrie'.

There's finance solutions, customer service and parts, used vehicle solutions, Daimler Truck Rental (yes, that's a new one - available for both new and used trucks), telematics through FleetBoard with a number of added features such as an Uptime programme and a comprehensive dashboard feature and of course, the all-important training activities.

On the product side he announced the addition of two new abnormal truck tractors giving a range from 120tons to 250tons as well as the launch of the Allison Automatic transmission on the Fuso FJ range.

During question time, I asked Gerber if South Africa, being on Euro 2 as opposed to Europe's Euro 6 emissions standard was hindering progress and also how the Daimler Board in Germany viewed South Africa. You can read her answer here:

<https://fleetwatch.co.za/fleetwatch-article/daimler-ceo-tells-sa-change-emissions-policy-or-be-left-behind/>

► 28





▲ The entrance arch to 'The Daimler Truck Experience' gave an indication that this event was going to be a big one.

▼ Many different applications of Mercedes-Benz and Fuso trucks were on display like this FUSO TV33-400 in garbage collector guise.



► 27 With all that over, it was time to enter the 'candy' shop to taste the goodies. There was so much to choose from and I started with a drive on the hilly Gerotek test track in the Actros 2652 with ace driver Maxo Dlamini piloting the rig perfectly to show its prowess.

Then came the high-speed track where you had a choice of experiencing the eActros or one of the Fuso eCanters available. I chose the eCanter with Key Accounts manager Ludwich Ehlers behind the wheel and Jacky Fourie, Public Relations manager joining us in the cab.

Jacky will attest to this. When Ludwich entered the track and put his foot down, both Jacky and I said 'Whooooo Safari'. The acceleration was awesome - not something you're expect from a battery electric truck. The ride was smooth, gear changes seamless and overall, a great ride.

Then followed a short test drive in the Fuso FL fitted with the new Allison Automatic transmission and wow, I promise, you cannot feel the change from one gear to the next. It is sooooo smooth.

And then it was into the Actros 2652LS/33 RE to have a live demo

of the next generation Active Brake Assist 6, which applies full braking in the event of a stationary or moving object such as a car or truck not being noticed by the driver. An inflatable car was used for this exercise.

Behind the wheel was ace driver trainer Naveen Sook, Team Leader Driver Training and Fleetboard at Daimler and while I could describe this experience in words, you'd then have to come into the toilet with me. I nearly 'you know what' myself. Rather, have a look at the accompanying video to get a hands-on idea of how this marvel works. It's awesome.

Naveen also demonstrated Active Side Guard 2 and Active Frontguard Assist 2 which prevented Dirk Meyer, Value Chain Manager at Daimler, who was riding a bicycle alongside the truck as part of the live demo, from being wiped out. It's also in the video.

I wish I had more space here but I've run out. Suffice to say that no effort was spared in blasting out a powerful message that despite the market turmoil South Africa has faced - and is still facing - Daimler has re-evaluated itself and has come out fighting fit to beat the challenges and give full support - in multiple offerings - to its customers and the country as a whole. □

◀ Used trucks from TruckStore – one of Daimler's Value Chain offerings.







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## FUSO Trucks in South Africa: Driving Performance, Profitability, and Customer Satisfaction

**FUSO, A TRUSTED BRAND UNDER** Daimler Truck AG, has steadily built a strong reputation in South Africa's commercial vehicle market. Known for its reliability, fuel efficiency, and value for money, FUSO trucks are increasingly becoming the preferred choice for logistics and transport operators across the country.

### **A Legacy of Strength and Innovation**

FUSO's presence in South Africa spans over two decades, with its vehicles assembled locally at the Daimler Truck Southern Africa manufacturing plant in East London. The brand's success is rooted in its ability to offer robust, economical trucks tailored to the unique demands of African terrain and logistics. From light-duty Canters to extra-heavy-duty models like the FJ and TV series, FUSO's range caters to a wide spectrum of transport needs.

Olaf Petersen, Vice President for Sales and Marketing at Daimler Truck Southern Africa, reaffirms the brand's commitment to the region:

"FUSO Trucks continue to deliver exceptional value to our customers across Southern Africa. From fuel efficiency to reliability, our products are designed to meet the demanding needs of the region's transport and logistics sectors. We are committed to strengthening our market position by offering not only robust vehicles but also outstanding service and support that help our customers grow their businesses."

### **Customer-Driven Success**

South African operators have consistently praised FUSO trucks for their performance and profitability. One logistics company found the TV33-400S model to be a game-

**"We're having good results with our FUSO TV33-400S on fuel consumption. We're running approx. 2.7/2.8 km/litre loaded with 34-ton links running to Zambia loaded one way."**





changer: "After testing the FUSO TV33-400S, it was clear that this product would live up to our expectations, and we have never looked back since. The FUSO TV33-400S makes sense from a competitive pricing perspective."

Fuel efficiency is a standout feature for many users. One operator shared: "From a fuel consumption point of view, we are quite happy. We are achieving fairly good results on our short to medium runs." Another customer running FUSO TV33-400S on long-haul routes to Zambia reported: "We're having good results with our FUSO TV33-400S on fuel consumption. We're running approx. 2.7/2.8 km/litre loaded with 34-ton links running to Zambia loaded one way." These figures are impressive, especially considering the heavy loads and challenging routes involved.

### **Built for Efficiency and Comfort**

Petersen highlights that FUSO's engineering is focused on both operational efficiency and driver comfort: "FUSO exemplifies our commitment to fuel efficiency and driver comfort. Features like the fuel injection pumps for precise injection amount & timing, aerodynamic cab design, and

smooth-shifting Automated Manual Transmission are all engineered to reduce operating costs and driver fatigue."

This is echoed by customer feedback: "The power output is fine and fuel economy of FUSO Trucks are really good." "Very happy with the fuel consumption on our application, it is 'making me money'."

### **Reliability and Support**

Beyond performance, FUSO's extensive dealer network and aftersales support play a crucial role in customer satisfaction. Petersen adds: "The brand offers tailored service plans, genuine parts availability, and flexible financing options to ensure minimal downtime and maximum profitability. Most of our customers are very happy with the performance of our FUSO range."

### **Conclusion**

FUSO's growing footprint in South Africa is a testament to its ability to deliver on the promises of durability, efficiency, and value. Whether for short-medium haul urban deliveries and construction, FUSO trucks are proving to be reliable partners for businesses looking to optimize their operations and bottom line.

**TV33-400S  
model is a  
game-changer**

**"FUSO  
exemplifies our  
commitment to  
fuel efficiency  
and driver  
comfort."**

**"Very happy  
with the fuel  
consumption on  
our application"**



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#### WALKING LUNGES

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Description
15 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	20 sec Work, 20 sec Rest	45 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin at one end of the truck and step forward with one foot and bend the knee to 90°</li> <li>Extend the other leg straight out behind you and place the back heel to the ground</li> <li>Then straighten both legs and repeat movement with other leg stepping forward</li> </ul>

**Important cues:**

- Don't allow the front knee to pass over the heel or collapse inward and ensure to maintain a full spine

SCAN FOR VIDEO

### LEGS WORKOUT

#### SIT-TO-STANDS

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Description
15 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	20 sec Work, 20 sec Rest	45 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin standing with feet back towards a step and feet hip width apart</li> <li>Move into a squat position by bending of the hips to that your buttocks makes contact with the step</li> <li>Push through the heels as you straighten both legs and move into an upright position</li> </ul>

**Important cues:**

- This movement should be performed with control
- Avoid using your arms to help lift from the step, but rather focus on using your leg strength
- Squeeze your buttock muscles as you lift

SCAN FOR VIDEO

### CARDIO

#### FORWARD JOGGING

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Description
15 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	30 sec Work, 30 sec Rest	45 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin at one end of the truck and jog forward with a straight line with hands placed under the front end of the truck</li> </ul>

**Important cues:**

- Maintain the same pace for the entire duration
- Keep your body upright with head facing forward
- Use your arms as you move forward
- Focus on deep, rhythmic breathing

SCAN FOR VIDEO

### CARDIO

#### MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced	Description
15 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	30 sec Work, 30 sec Rest	45 sec Work, 15 sec Rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin in a plank position so that your body is in a straight line with hands placed under the front end of the truck</li> <li>Lift one foot off the floor as you pull the knee up and in towards the same elbow</li> <li>Return the foot to the floor while pulling the other knee up and in to create a chopping motion</li> </ul>

**Important cues:**

- Alternately repeat this movement
- This can be performed on an incline with hands placed on a box or top of the truck (beginner) or on a flat surface (intermediate)
- Keep your stomach and buttock muscles tight
- Try to keep your body in a straight line

SCAN FOR VIDEO



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◀ Anton Falck, Vice President of Hino South Africa, with the new Hino Dutro Z EV. "I can't hear anything!" Silence is Golden.

▼ The Hino 300 Hybrid has been on trial since 2023 with promising results - such as a 20% fuel saving. Another 33 units have now been added to the trial programme.

# HINO to trial new battery electric van

**W**hen one normally visits Zwartkops Raceway, your ears are blasted by the exciting roar of high-powered racing cars careening round the track with the smell of burnt rubber and high-performance fuel permeating the air. Not so when you're invited by Hino South Africa to check out its new energy truck offerings. They are silent and the only smell you pick up is the deodorant worn by the person closest to you.

It was in 2023 that the company began to trial the Hino 300 diesel-electric hybrid putting three units into Namlog Logistics on a non-ownership basis. The company has since introduced another 33 of these models - again to trial on a subsidised basis. (See story on page 60).

In line with Hino's commitment to take a multipath approach in the drive towards new energy vehicles, the company has now brought in

a Hino battery electric van to put on trial. Called the Hino Dutro Z EV, it is already operating in some international markets and Hino, apart from showcasing it as another of Hino's alternative transport solutions, wants to assess local interest in this innovative vehicle.

"It has a roomy body with a one ton carrying capacity and is intended for last mile deliveries in urban areas with a driving range of 150 km," says Itumeleng Segage, General Manager of Hino South Africa, adding that it is fitted with a 40 kWh lithium ion battery which can be recharged to full in eight hours using a normal 5 W domestic power socket - or in less than one hour using a 50 kW quick charger.

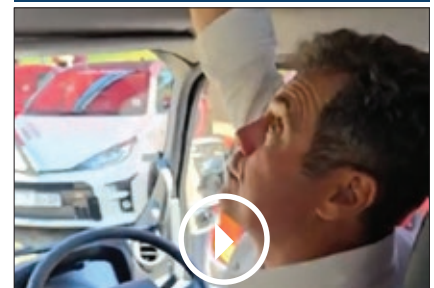
Let's see how the Dutro Z EV does. There's certainly a market for it in last mile deliveries. But in normal Hino style, the company is not rushing in. They're doing their homework - which is the right way to go for long term sustainability. □



**WATCH THE VIDEOS**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tX5J46JqABY&t=11s>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JdsRFGYo4A>





## Potchefstroom

# 4 trucks tested 1 fail, 3 fines



WATCH THE VIDEO



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQ201aq9EP8>

**F**leetWatch and its partners on the Brake & Tyre Watch project are longing for the day when we can report a 100% pass rate on trucks brought in for testing. We thought we might get it at our last training exercise in Potchefstroom - the 54th event since we launched this project back in 2006 - but it was not to be. Aaaargh!

Things were really looking up when three of the four rigs chosen randomly from the roads for testing on the second day of the training exercise - the practical day - got through pretty well, albeit receiving fines for aspects like tyre faults. However, none of the faults justified a full Discontinuation and two were allowed to bring in outside service providers to fix the faults on site before being allowed back on the road.

Yes, yes, yes. History in the making. We're going to reach 100%. But then, the fourth rig - a side-tipper combination - was brought in and BOOM! A horror story. No brakes on the trailer. The one brake drum on one of





the axles had no shoes in it. It was empty. (See page 43). The other drums also had non-functioning brakes due to incorrect settings and total pure maintenance neglect. So much for "the brakes failed" as is commonly given as a reason for a rig crashing into 30 or so cars. The ABS was also disconnected and non-functional.

A first for us was a loose rear axle that could fall off at any time. A host of other horrible faults delegated this rig for an immediate Discontinuation due to it being totally unroadworthy. The only positive thing about this rig was that the traffic officials were exposed to this 'gemors' giving them a hands-on, real-time idea of the level of unroadworthiness found on many rigs on our roads.

And that is the beauty of the *Brake & Tyre Watch* exercises. The core focus is to train traffic officials to spot signs of

unroadworthiness on rigs they stop on the roads. They don't have equipment out there so we show them critical signs to look for. If, through the knowledge gained from our *Brake & Tyre Watch* expert partners on both the theory and practical days, they suspect a vehicle to be unroadworthy, they can then escort it to the nearest test centre where various inspections, such as a brake roller test, can be conducted to provide the necessary evidence that will stand up in a court of law.

An example could be if they see incorrectly set slack adjusters. This could visually indicate imbalanced braking but it needs a brake roller test to confirm the imbalance which must be no more than 30% between the left and right wheels on an axle. If it's over that, it's a fail.

Over the next few pages, we take you with us on a visit to the theory

day, the practical day and various other activities of the *Brake & Tyre Watch* projects. Also, check out the video to see some of the action.

## The Brake & Tyre Watch A-Team

### ▼ From left to right:

The *Brake & Tyre Watch* events would not be possible without the expert trainers (pictured below) from our valued partners who generously give of their time, resources and expertise. A heartfelt thank you to Bridgestone, ZF Aftermarket, Powerfleet, Orafol, BPW Axles, JOST, Standard Bank, Santam, JC Auditors, Accident Specialists and DP World. For the Potchefstroom event, UD Trucks Southern Africa was our OEM partner. Thank you all for helping us make South African roads safer. You are all Super Stars!

## FleetWatch Brake & Tyre Watch trainers







AFTERMARKET

LEMFÖRDER



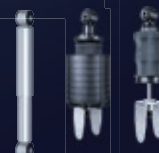
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# Salute to all our trainers



▲ **Full house** traffic officers ready for a day's expert training on all things trucking.



▲ **BPW Axles:** Sean Annandale, the expert on axles.

If you want to meet Super Stars, look no further than our expert trainers from our *Brake & Tyre Watch* partner companies. Their passion – on both the theoretical and practical days - is infectious. As for their knowledge, there's a University of Trucking Knowledge among them. Salute to each one of you.



▲ **JC Auditors:** Lea Nkululeko 'NK' Ndawonde talking up professional standards in the trucking sector.

▼ **JOST:** Manie Roux gives a thumbs up!



▲ Each traffic officer receives a gift – provided by sponsors in Santam bags.



▲ **ZF Aftermarket:** Johan van der Merwe – expert on all things brakes.

▼ **Bridgestone:** (below middle) Dries Venter... Mr. Tyre!

▼ **Orafol:** (Below right) Clive Versfeld educates officials about the importance of conspicuity tape and visibility.



▲ **Standard Bank:** Kathy Bell (left) and Virushka Govender – a dynamic duo.







## VALUED PARTNERS



*FleetWatch* thanks all the above partners for their unwavering passion and commitment which contributes significantly to the success of all *Brake & Tyre Watch* events.

**Making a difference –  
because safety matters**



▲ UD Trucks..... Johan Swart, Product Manager, UD Trucks Southern Africa, presents a gift to a delegate.

## Thanks to UD Trucks

Our OEM partner for the Potchefstroom event was UD Trucks Southern Africa with Johan Swart, Product Manager at UD Trucks, giving an insightful talk on the theory day on how today's trucks are designed to keep roads safer. A truck tractor and trailer were provided on the second day for practical training. Thanks to UD Trucks for helping to make our roads safer.





# Tyre faults

The most visible components on a rig are the tyres yet it's amazing how often blatantly clear tyre faults are totally ignored, indicating either no attention being paid to pre-trip inspections or a non-caring attitude towards road safety or cost savings.



▲ Flat spot wear caused by faulty mechanical components. The wear is down to the beading which makes this tyre not only unroadworthy but illegal. It should be replaced. What a waste of money.



▲ A smooth and dangerously worn trailer tyre, not roadworthy and illegal to operate. Must be removed and replaced.



▲ Diagonal wear probably caused by uneven tyre inflation, a clear indicator of maintenance neglect. Wasting money.



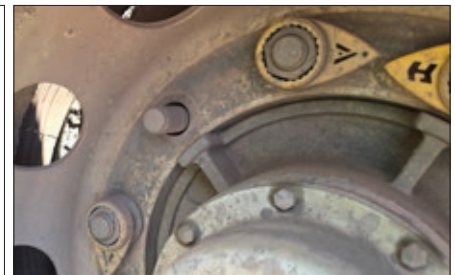
▲ No attention has been paid to the tyres on this rig. This tyre shows massive uneven wear to the point where it is now illegal. Note the beading showing through on the left.



▲ Different views of the same tyre. We feature two different views to show how easy it is, from any angle, for an operator or driver to spot an unroadworthy tyre and replace it. There's no blinking tread on this. No care for the safety of the driver nor other road users.



## Wheel nuts



▲ Many might feel that one missing wheel nut is no reason to be concerned. Well, it is. The late great Dave Scott used to refer to a 'cascade of events' where one fault would lead to another and eventually cascade into disaster. This applies to a missing wheel nut which could lead to wheel vibration and eventually cascade into breaking off the remaining wheel studs - and even complete wheel detachment. On the left is a loose wheel nut which indicates further trouble while the two pictures above show missing wheels nuts. Not at all Best Practice.





▲ **Start of the training** always begins with a prayer.

## Putting theory into practice

Learning in a classroom is one thing but practical application of the theory ideally rounds off any learning process. And that is what we do at *Brake & Tyre Watch*. The practical day begins with the traffic officials divided into teams with each team allocated a team leader from our crew who will guide them from station to station where our expert trainers take them through inspections of the trucks brought in. The day becomes a hive of activity. Look, touch, feel and learn is the mantra and the only stupid question is the one that is not asked. Knowledge is Power. Yeah!



▲ **QUIZ at the end of the training...** Great fun and camaraderie reigns at the end of the two day training when teams compete to answer questions and win the team prize – an accident investigation kit donated by Accident Specialist.



▲ **Craige Proctor-Parker of Accident Specialist**, guides a delegate in tracing the ABS cables under a trailer.



▲ **In the pits with BPW's Sean Annadale**. For many cops, this is a first.



▲ **Tyres...** Dries Venter of Bridgestone, is the go-to man for all things to do with tyres.



▲ **Getting up close...** Manie Roux from Jost explains the workings of the Fifth Wheel. You'd be surprised at how many faults are picked up on Fifth Wheels, an all-too often overlooked safety component which, when it fails, leads to catastrophic consequences. Safety latches are often missing and replaced with blou-draad - a definite recipe for disaster.

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# JC AUDITORS

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▲ Coming into the test centre for a brake roller test and under-carriage inspection to confirm numerous visible faults.



▲ The brake service line has been disconnected and blanked off. There is no service brake on that booster. A deliberate move to kill as someone blanked it off.

► Not only are there no brake shoes in this brake drum but the tyre is also totally flat and coming off the rim. Gemors!

## No brakes

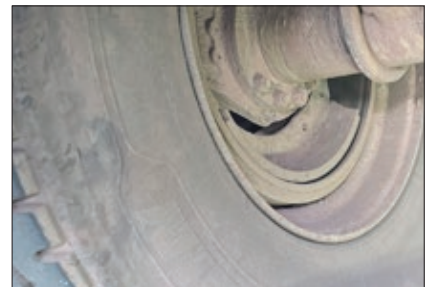
All these faults on just one rig. How can such an operator sleep at night? Section 49 of the NRTA spells out the Duties of an Operator. This owner has ignored all of them and should not be in this industry.



▲ Count the number of faults seen from the test centre pit. You'll need a calculator.



▲ Zero reading means zero brakes. This rig is a death trap.



▲ Note the gap between the brake lining and the brake drum. No brakes



▲ Again, note the gap between the drum and the brake lining. No brakes.



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## A FLEETWATCH

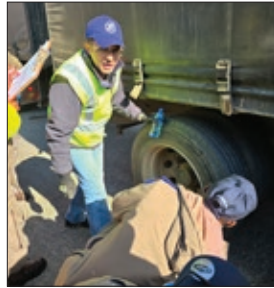


## TRAINING EVENT

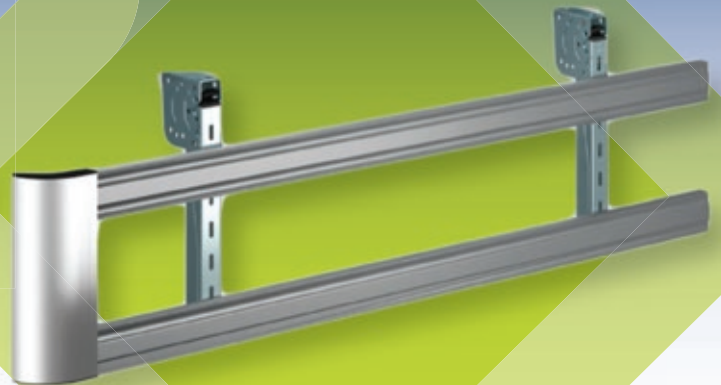


► **Getting under:** Patrick O'Leary, Editor of *FleetWatch*, gets down and under with two traffic officials to show them how to do it when out on the road. Don't be scared of getting your uniforms dirty. It took him about 10 minutes to get up again.

► **Teamwork...** Kylie Saunders, *FleetWatch* Events co-ordinator, ensures each day goes smoothly and if there are any hitches, she sorts them out before anyone becomes aware of them. Salute to you Kylie!



► Johan van der Merwe of ZF Aftermarket takes traffic officials through all aspects of a braking system showing them that there is no such thing as "the brakes failed". Brakes only fail if you fail to maintain them – or fail to put your foot on the brake pedal.



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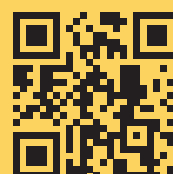
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# Brake & Tyre Watch CAMPAIGN

**FleetWatch** magazine, along with its traditional partners in this project stage the highly successful **Brake & Tyre Watch** road safety initiative on a quarterly basis nationwide.

## Background

**Brake & Tyre Watch** is a groundbreaking initiative designed to heighten awareness among transport operators about efficient braking and tyre checks, linked to comprehensive preventative maintenance on trucks. This includes critical safety elements such as lighting and reflectives. The project goes beyond awareness, aiming to empower Traffic Officials with specialised knowledge, enhancing their ability to intervene more effectively and remove unroadworthy heavy vehicles from our roads.

DATE	LOCATION	INSPECTED	FAILED	%
Feb 2006	Gauteng-City Deep	24	21	88%
Feb 2007	Middleburg	35	24	69%
May 2007	Centurion	41	17	41%
March 2008	Midway KZN	26	10	38%
June 2008	Kroonstad	8	7	88%
Feb 2009	Western Cape	25	25	100%
June 2009	Bloemfontein	54	26	48%
Nov 2009	Pietermaritzburg	12	11	92%
March 2010	Port Elizabeth	16	6	38%
July 2010	Rustenburg	7	5	71%
Dec 2010	Limpopo	11	10	91%
Feb 2011	Estcourt	24	20	83%
June 2011	Northern Cape	24	20	83%
Sept 2011	JHB - Langlaagte	24	18	75%
Feb 2012	Midway KZN	12	11	92%
May 2012	Klerksdorp	16	14	88%
Aug 2012	Tshwane	25	17	68%
Nov 2012	Krugerdsdorp	13	11	85%
Feb 2013	Port Shepstone	9	6	67%
May 2013	Donkerhoek	19	14	74%
Aug 2013	Western Cape	41	19	46%
Nov 2013	Marian Hill	41	29	71%
Feb 2014	Tshwane	12	4	33%
May 2014	Mpumalanga	13	12	92%
August 2014	Ekurhuleni	32	19	59%
Nov 2014	Heidelberg	10	8	80%
March 2015	Potchefstroom	30	21	70%
May 2015	Ermelo	11	7	64%
Aug 2015	Durban	14	11	79%
Nov 2015	Langlaagte	15	11	73%
March 2016	Estcourt	10	8	80%
May 2016	Ekurhuleni	12	10	83%
Aug 2016	Brackenfell	13	11	85%
Nov 2016	Kimberley	10	7	70%
Mar 2017	Mokopane - Polokwane	12	8	67%
May 2017	Pinetown	6	4	67%
Aug 2017	Bloemfontein	5	4	80%
Nov 2017	Maropeng	8	6	75%
Feb 2018	Beaufort West	5	2	40%
May 2018	Musina	8	7	88%
Sept 2018	Nelson Mandela Bay	6	5	83%
Nov 2018	Western Cape	6	5	83%
Feb 2019	Bapong	13	11	85%
Mar 2019	Donkerhoek	4	3	75%
May 2019	Windhoek, Namibia	6	4	67%
Aug 2019	Harrismith	7	6	86%
April 2023	Bapong	6	5	83%
Jun 2023	Springs	6	5	83%
Oct 2023	Donkerhoek	6	5	83%
March 2024	Walvis Bay, Namibia	5	1	20%
May 2024	eThekweni, KZN	4	3	75%
July 2024	Gqeberha, Eastern Cape	5	5	100%
Nov 2024	Bloemfontein	4	4	100%
March 2025	Heidelberg	2	1	50%
May 2025	Harrismith	6	2	25%
Sept 2025	Potchefstroom	4	1	25%
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>823</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>69%</b>

## Training Day

Prior to the hands-on testing day, Traffic Officials undergo crucial training. This free-of-charge training, facilitated by industry partners, focuses on the quality of brake maintenance, determining braking efficiency, identifying tyre faults, and addressing general issues. Each full-day session includes practical checks with roadworthy trucks and trailers, ensuring officials are well-equipped for their vital roles in maintaining road safety.

## Practical Test Day Event

The hands-on test day unfolds at a selected Vehicle Testing station within the chosen province. Randomly selecting trucks from main routes and urban centers, the inspection pits and Brake Roller Test ascertain the state of brakes and braking systems. Close collaboration with Provincial Traffic Officials and SAPS enables a comprehensive check for trailer defects and other faults. The rationale is to challenge common accident attributions, emphasising that proper brake maintenance is pivotal in preventing failures.

## Practical Test Day FleetWatch's Concerns

**FleetWatch** addresses a worrying trend in operators skipping maintenance intervals due to economic pressures. Published results serve as a stark reminder that brakes and tyres, despite being hidden components, are paramount safety items demanding meticulous upkeep. The initiative aims to curb this trend by shedding light on actual findings, advocating for the highest maintenance standards.

## Gratitude to Partners

**FleetWatch** extends sincere thanks to its dedicated partners. Their unwavering passion and commitment significantly contribute to the project's success, reinforcing the ethos that if **Brake & Tyre Watch** helps save just one life, it will have all been worthwhile. **Join us in making a difference on the roads – because safety matters.**

## MAIN PARTNERS



## AD-HOC PARTNERS







### Man at the helm

Operations Director of Renew-it Truck Centre, Wayne Willers: "We've brought into the industry a facility that elevates the country onto an international standards platform in terms of truck repairs."



▼ **Birds eye view:** An aerial view of Renew-it Truck Centre, a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Spec Holdings. R150-million was invested into land, buildings and equipment making this the largest truck repair facility in the country.



### Cab straightening

▲ The anchor frame built into the floor has been extended to accommodate not only cab repairs but also light chassis straightening on smaller trucks.

# World-class truck repair centre opens

**When three global OEM truck manufacturers are willing to display their company logos prominently outside your building to endorse your services and facilities, you know you're off to a great start. And that's exactly what has happened at Renew-it Truck Centre, a world class truck repair centre recently opened in Kempton Park alongside the R21. Patrick O'Leary visited this facility and came away highly impressed.**



### Paint booths

◀ ▶ No corners were cut in assuring every rig comes out with a top-quality paint job carrying a lifetime warranty. The four paint spray booth combination ovens were installed by Aero-O-Cure, a well-established local South African company renowned for its quality products in this arena. A dust free environment has been assured via the installation of huge extractor chutes repairs."



**Yeah! Bring the shine back'**



**L**et's face it, the economy is not in good shape and at a time when there is more bad than good news on the global and local fronts - Trump's tariffs being just one example - it is just so refreshing to walk into a new venture which reeks of optimism and confidence all aimed at providing local truckers with world-class panel-beating and full truck repair services.

With two years in the planning and R150-million invested into land, buildings and equipment, Renew-it Truck Centre has been open for just over two months and already major OEMs including Volvo, Daimler Truck and MAN have inspected the facility and given it their individual OEM-approved endorsements as meeting their high standards of repair for their brands. More OEMs are set to follow. A number of insurance companies are also already on board giving it the green light for approved repair solutions.

Renew-it Truck Centre is a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Spec Holdings and a Level I B-BBEE business and has been designed

to serve South Africa's transport, insurance and logistics sectors with specialised and world-class truck repair services. As two of its posters blare out: "Deliver more than is expected and bring the shine back."

Yeah. "Bring the shine back". There is nothing worse for a transport operator than seeing the crumpled wreck of one of his trucks after a crash. And we all know how truck crashes have escalated over the past two years. Not a day goes by that *FleetWatch* doesn't receive notifications of serious truck crashes. It's become like a warzone out there and unfortunately, many of these involve not only crushed trucks but also crushed bodies.

While the pain of losing a loved one in a crash will remain in the heart forever, there is hope that life can be brought back to the truck itself – and Renew-it Truck Centre has made it its mission to do just that.

That is why spending a few hours with Operations Director Wayne Willers - a man with some 28 years of experience in the vehicle

repair industry - was an uplifting interaction. It wiped out the horror of truck crash scenes and ignited a spark of hope that at least the shine can be brought back in one positive way.

I know I'm sounding a bit dramatic here - and maybe a bit emotional - but I really did feel that way. I have been on many truck crash scenes over the years and there is nothing - absolutely nothing - on any of these scenes that makes you smile. It's all horrible. But walking round this facility, I was smiling all the way. It was a sort of renewal of hope that good can emerge from bad. Why do I say this?

### On another level

Well, this place is on another level. It's not only the passion and skill of the people but also the commitment to excellence with no short cuts having been taken and no penny spared in ensuring quality work is guaranteed. A considerable investment has been made on sourcing top equipment and tools from around the world to 'bring ▶ 50



## TRUCK REPAIRS | TOP FACILITY



### Wheel alignment

▲ Josam equipment is recognised throughout the world as leading the pack when it comes to precision measurements on wheel alignment. Renew-it Truck Centre has imported all the equipment needed from Josam in Sweden. Wheel alignment is a critical factor for the safe and efficient operation of a rig on the road.

 **WATCH THE VIDEO**



Demonstration of how Josam equipment works on cab straightening.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKEznLXXbBY>



### Josam

▲ A wheel alignment station. Specialised training for staff has been conducted by a technical expert from Josam in Sweden.

### Chassis straightening

◆ The chassis straightening section is state-of-the-art with equipment - along with a vast array of special tooling - imported from the USA. Special tooling from Josam in Sweden such as the G-Clamp seen below is also used.




► 49 the shine back' to any battered and bruised truck that enters this portal.

Take the chassis straightening section as an example. It's a marvel with all equipment imported from the USA. The brand is Bee-Line which is a world-renowned brand with an array of special tools that boggles the mind. Also used in this area of the operation are special tools imported from Josam in Sweden such as G-Clamps as well as state-of-the-art wheel alignment equipment.

For the cab straightening functions, Josam again comes into the picture with the necessary tools imported from Sweden. The anchor frame built into the floor has been extended beyond its normal requirements to accommodate not only repairs but also light chassis straightening on the smaller trucks.

Barend Oosthuizen, a man with over 20 years experience in the ► 52

A close-up, low-angle shot of a Volvo steering wheel and dashboard. The steering wheel is dark, and the dashboard features a green indicator light. The Volvo logo is visible on the steering wheel. The overall lighting is dim, creating a professional and focused atmosphere.

V O L V O

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Engineered to deliver exceptional efficiency, the FH Euro 6 consumes less diesel to transport the same payload. To top it off, it potentially allows for longer service intervals, meaning improved uptime.



## TRUCK REPAIRS | TOP FACILITY



▲ The promise of quality work is given credence via a 1-year guarantee on all workmanship, a lifetime guarantee on paintwork and an OEM parts warranty of 12 months or manufacturer backed.

### Expansive Workshop

▲ The workshop is open and airy with all repair stations strategically placed to ensure focussed work without crowding and 'mess'. Even the lighting has been given special attention so as to give maximum visibility on all tasks while also providing a clean and friendly work environment.

### And while you wait... coffee on tap ▶



▶ 50 vehicle repair industry, was busy on the damaged cab of a truck tractor while I was there and gave a short demonstration of how some of the Josam equipment works. See [video on previous page](#).

The four paint spray booth combination ovens – overseen by an experienced paint shop manager – are super impressive and have been installed by Aero-O-Cure, a well-established local South African company renowned for its quality products in this arena. A dust free environment has been assured via the installation of huge extractor chutes.

In the wash-bay area housed in a different building, Aero-O-Cure has also installed a back-up water installation system in the event of normal water supplies being cut – certainly not an unlikely situation given the infrastructure problems being experienced around Gauteng.

Operating all this equipment requires high skill sets and apart from having experienced people on board, on-going training is conducted by the suppliers. Josam, for example, has – and will continue

to do so – sent experts out from Sweden to train the personnel.

The attention to detail all revolves around providing a repair infrastructure which supports professional end-to-end truck restoration with quality being the over-riding aim. Confidence of being able to achieve top quality and meet the promises being made is given credence via a 1-year guarantee on all workmanship, a lifetime guarantee on paintwork and an OEM parts warranty of 12 months or manufacturer backed.

### In sync with truckers

Apart from the facilities, what struck me is that Willers and his team are in sync with the trucking sector. The trucking world is not an easy arena in which to operate and they understand the needs of truckers who will be using their services. They understand the concept of Total Cost of Ownership; they understand that downtime is a taboo profit killer in this era of tight margins; they understand the harsh and stressful world in which transporters operate. They

understand the transporter. As such, they have structured their operations around fast turn-around times but with no sacrifice to quality workmanship.

This is vitally important because, let's face it, it's going to be a long time before Transnet gets its rail services back on track – if you'll excuse the pun – and the trucking sector will continue to play a vital role in keeping the wheels of the economy turning. The unfortunate reality, however, is that while doing so, there will continue to be crashes and when these happen, it will be comforting for the transporter to know that his crumpled truck is in the hands of capable people who will go all out to get his truck back on the road in the shortest possible time in tip-top condition. On this point, let Willer have the last words:

"We've brought into the industry a facility that not only elevates the country onto an international standards platform in terms of truck repairs but is staffed by people who show empathy and care for the trucking world."

That about sums it up. □

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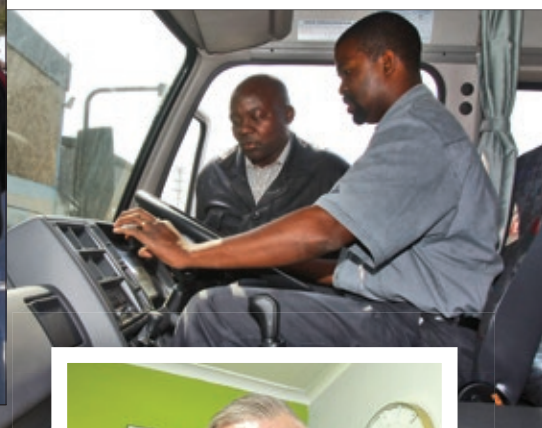
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Continuous driver skills training should be ongoing.



# How to identify a professional truck driver in SA

**I**n this competitive and highly regulated industry, the difference between a professional truck driver and an unprofessional one can mean the difference between safe, efficient deliveries and costly, high-risk operations. But how can one identify a truly professional truck driver in South Africa? In this article, **Flippie Bronkhorst**, a man with over 25 years' experience in transport and driver training and now lead RTMS Auditor for JC Auditors and Training Specialist at The Kunamandla Group, spells it out.

## 1. Compliance with Legal Requirements

Professionalism begins with compliance. A professional truck driver:

- Holds the correct valid driver's

license (Code CI, EC, or ECI) for the type of vehicle operated.

- Possesses a valid Professional Driving Permit (PrDP) as required by law.
- Undergoes regular medical fitness assessments to ensure physical and mental suitability.
- Adheres to the National Road Traffic Act, OHS Act 85 of 1993, and all relevant regulations and requirements.

## 2. Commitment to Road Safety

Safety is the hallmark of a professional driver. Signs include:

- Strict use of seatbelts at all times.
- Obedience to speed limits, especially heavy vehicle restrictions.
- No tolerance for risky behaviours



**by Flippie Bronkhorst  
JC Auditors**

such as cell phone use while driving, overtaking on blind rises, or tailgating.

- Practicing defensive driving techniques like the Smith System and SIPDE (Scan, Identify, Predict, Decide, Execute).
- Understanding vehicle stability and risks linked to overloading, underloading, and rollover prevention.

## 3. Vehicle Care and Pre-Trip Checks

A professional driver treats his/her truck as a safety-critical tool. This is shown by:

- Performing pre-trip and post-trip inspections, including brakes, tyres, lights, coupling and load securement.



- Logging defects accurately and reporting issues promptly.
- Maintaining compliance with SANS 10231 safe loading regulations and TRH II abnormal load guidelines where applicable.

#### 4. Positive Attitude and Professional Conduct

Professional truck drivers represent their company on the road. Indicators include:

- Polite and respectful communication with clients, colleagues and the public.
- Wearing company uniform or PPE with pride.
- Demonstrating discipline by reporting on time, meeting delivery deadlines and keeping accurate paperwork.
- Showing honesty and integrity when incidents or errors occur.



**Regular medical fitness checks will ensure physical and mental health**



**A positive attitude and professional conduct is essential**

#### 5. Fatigue and Health Management

Long-haul transport places heavy demands on drivers. A professional knows how to:

- Manage fatigue by adhering to rest breaks and NBCRFLI-regulated driving hours.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs, and substances that impair judgement.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle to ensure alertness and long-term career sustainability.

#### 6. Knowledge of Routes and Risk Awareness

Route risk assessment is part of professional driving. A skilled driver:

- Is familiar with high-risk routes, including weather patterns, steep gradients and high-crime zones.
- Uses technology such as GPS tracking, telematics and fleet apps responsibly.
- Reports route deviations or hazards immediately to fleet control.

#### 7. Continuous Skills Development

The best drivers understand that professionalism is ongoing. They:

- Attend refresher training in defensive driving, dangerous goods and emergency response.



**Knowledge how to use modern truck technology responsibly**

- Stay updated with all company policies.
- Mentor junior drivers and contribute to a safety culture within their fleets.

Identifying a professional truck driver in South Africa goes beyond simply checking a license. It is about recognising a combination of compliance, safety, integrity, and accountability. Employers, clients, and regulators look for drivers who not only meet minimum legal requirements but embody the values of responsibility and professionalism on the road. □





Hundreds of trucks on the road, but no one-size-fits-all finance package. Investigate the options.

# The differences between buy-back, trade-back and residual value



**by John Loxton**  
Boutique Leasing Services

The question is often asked about the differences between a buy-back agreement, a trade-back agreement, and a residual value. Each has its own well-earned space in the vehicle finance (and procurement) market but it is essential to sweat the details. In this article, *John Loxton*, Managing Director of Boutique Leasing Services (BLS), explores the differences but urges buyers to consult with a professional to mitigate the associated risks.

## Buy-Back Agreement

A buy-back agreement is a contract where the seller agrees to repurchase the item from the buyer at a predetermined price within a specified period. This type of agreement is often used where an OEM or dealer agrees to buy back a vehicle after a certain period and/or mileage. The buy-back price is usually set at the time of the original sale.

This type of agreement is typically used in instances where the funder of the vehicles and the customer require a predetermined - or at least a negotiated - repurchase price underwritten by the dealer or manufacturer.

The obvious benefit of a buy-back agreement is that it reduces the risk of future resale value fluctuations. A buy-back agreement can be used in isolation in the event of a cash purchase but is more commonly used as a financial instrument. The latter will result in a significantly reduced cashflow as the financier will in effect only fund the difference between the purchase price and the net present value (NPV) of the buy-back value.

However, a buy-back value has some serious consequences should the customer not manage the usage factors of each individual vehicle under such an agreement. The typical buy-back value is linked to a maximum distance over the predetermined contract term. Exceeding the maximum contract distance could result in punitive damages (normally calculated at a rate per kilometre) or even render the buy-back agreement null and void.

Traditionally buy-back agreements are fairly rigid and while the initial values/percentages may appear aggressive, the terms and conditions may in fact undo the apparent value of a buy-back.

Issues to carefully study are linked to the unilateral adjustment of the buy-back value at any time during the finance term; the clause pertaining to fair wear and tear (i.e. in reference to the physical condition); application of mid-term, pro-rata excess charges and the

strict adherence to OEM service and maintenance requirements. It is an overall mechanism to reduce overall monthly cash flow and/or the uncertainty of future resale value fluctuations but beware the finer details.

### Trade-Back Agreement

A trade-back agreement is similar to a buy-back agreement but instead of repurchasing the item, the seller agrees to accept the item as a trade-in towards the purchase of a new item. Basically a dealer may offer to accept a used vehicle as a trade-in for a new vehicle, often providing a credit towards the purchase price of the new vehicle.

This type of agreement exposes the customer to a substantially higher level of risk than the buy-back agreement. The trade-off is that the dealer or manufacturer would typically offer a more aggressive trade-back value when compared to the buy-back value. Unfortunately, this is not always a function of the expected future replacement with the same brand but more likely the fact that the customer is locked into the agreement with very little room to manoeuvre once locked into a trade-back agreement.

The punitive and costly exit from such an agreement also provides the supplier with an inherent safety net in terms of the likelihood to recover the trade-back value. A trade-back agreement offers substantial value to a customer operating a fleet with a huge level of knowledge of the pitfalls and an even higher level of discipline in managing the vehicle fleet. The contract conditions to look out for are similar to that of the buy-back and with specific reference to any opportunity afforded to the dealer or manufacturer to amend the future trade-back value.

The biggest concern with the trade-back agreement is that it has the potential to lock the customer into a specific brand for an excessively long time. The obvious danger of being locked into a specific brand is that the specific brand may not necessarily offer the most cost-effective technology or even specification at the time when

## In short: what they mean

**When considering financial agreements such as buy-back agreements, trade-back agreements and residual values, it's crucial to understand the specific terms and potential risks associated with each option.**

- **Buy-Back Agreement:** This agreement offers the benefit of reducing the risk of future resale value fluctuations but comes with strict conditions and potential penalties for exceeding usage limits.
- **Trade-Back Agreement:** While this agreement may offer a more aggressive trade-back value, it exposes the customer to higher risks and can lock them into a specific brand for a long time.
- **Residual Value:** This value reflects the expected future value of an asset and offers flexibility to adjust it in-contract to reflect changes in the operating environment and usage parameters.

the trade-back comes into effect. Additionally, future agreements within this same brand may be less beneficial due to the customer being locked into the brand and/or the knowledge that it could be quite costly to exit the brand or any trade-back based agreement.

### Residual Value

Residual value is the estimated value of an asset at the end of its lease term or useful life. In the context of a lease, the residual value is typically used in the corporate fleet environment where it reflects the expected future value of an asset subject to specific usage parameters. This value is typically set at the beginning of the lease and is based on the expected depreciation of the asset over the lease term. The industry prefers to refer to a residual based lease as a rental.

It is a pity that the fleet management industry at times was its own worst enemy and the perception of residual values (RV) is still fighting some negative sentiments. Any professional fleet

management entity would be able to offer a realistic and market related RV on a rental agreement. The benefit of the use of RV - compared to a buy-back - is the inherent flexibility of adjusting an RV in-contract to reflect any changes in operating environment and/or usage parameters (i.e. time and distance).

In terms of accounting principles, a rental should not allow the lessee/ renter to acquire ownership of the asset. However, a proper rental agreement should allow the lessee to extend the rental term to the optimal replacement point of the asset.

It should be non-negotiable consideration for any fleet customer to contract with an experienced fleet management service provider in order to extract the maximum value from a properly managed rental agreement and thus also the use of a residual value.

Understanding these differences and the associated risks can help you make an informed decision that best suits your financial situation and needs. □



**H**ino South Africa has boldly declared its confidence in its products and services with the launch of a six-year driveline warranty, covering every truck sold since 1 January 2025. At no extra cost to the buyer, this OEM-backed commitment is not just about lengthening coverage - it's about putting skin in the game and building customer trust. In a sector where uptime is money and residual value shapes the bottom line, Hino is signalling that it believes in its trucks enough to carry the risk with its customers.

"Hino's six-year warranty is more than an increase in cover. It is a vote of confidence in Hino's engineering and manufacturing standards, backed by a nationwide network of 66 dealers with highly skilled technicians to carry out the specified service and maintenance tasks according to the global Hino Quality Service standards," explains Anton Falck, Vice President of Hino SA.

For fleet operators, the message lands directly on fleet management priorities - cost predictability, asset longevity and the killer issue of downtime.

"The new warranty directly addresses key pain points for fleet operators, these being cost predictability, uptime and long-term asset value. It will be a major factor in reducing the cost of ownership, minimising unplanned downtime, enhancing residual value and extending operational confidence," Falck adds.

That confidence doesn't come cheap or easy. Hino SA executives only signed off after months of durability testing, data modelling and cross-departmental analysis. The result: evidence that South African operating conditions, matched to Hino's dealer infrastructure, could sustain a six-year promise without denting profitability or brand reputation. In other words, the trucks are tough enough and the back-up strong enough to deliver.



## Building trust with 6-year warranty

◀ Hino's six-year warranty mileage caps are generous - up to 900 000 km on a 700 Series truck-tractor or freight carrier, 600 000 km on the 500 Series and 400 000 km on the 300 Series.

### Beyond the extra mile

Hino SA's new six-year warranty provides tailored cover across its full truck line-up, reflecting the brand's confidence in durability. The 200 and 300 Series models come with 24 months basic warranty, 72 months driveline warranty, and 36 months protection against cab and chassis corrosion. The 500 Series offers the same corrosion coverage, with 72 months driveline cover but only 12 months basic warranty.

At the heavy end, the 700 Series truck-tractor and freight carrier carries 36 months basic warranty, 48 months driveline cover, and extended 48 months cab corrosion protection, alongside 36 months chassis coverage. This structured approach ensures that

each model has warranty terms matched to its operational demands.

Warranty mileage caps are generous - up to 900 000 km on a 700 Series truck-tractor or freight carrier, 600 000 km on the 500 Series and 400 000 km on the 300 Series. Even the 200 Series, typically used in short-haul and urban duty cycles, carries 250 000 km of drivetrain cover. Maintenance discipline is key, with service intervals and genuine parts forming the backbone of the deal.

By stretching beyond the industry norm, Hino is not only easing operator risk but redefining what trust looks like in the heavy truck sector. The six-year warranty cements Hino as a long-term partner, walking the talk that fleets don't just buy trucks - they buy uptime, predictability and peace of mind. □

### Hino South Africa 6 Year Warranty

	200 Series	300 Series	500 Series	700 Series TT+FC
1. Basic warranty excluding (2+3+4)	24 months	24 months	12 months	36 months
2. Driveline Warranty	72 months	72 months	72 months	48 months
3. Corrosion and perforation on the cab panel	36 months	36 months	36 months	48 months
4. Corrosion and perforation on the chassis frame	36 months	36 months	36 months	36 months

▲ This table highlights Hino SA's exemplary six-year warranty: demonstrating how long-term trucking partnerships are forged and underwritten by an OEM. Extended cover on critical truck components boosts customer confidence and bottom-line performance.



# Tata Motors and Iveco join forces



**N**ow here's something we didn't see coming. The commercial vehicle industry has just seen an Indian-Italian handshake that could change the competitive map - and the BRICS alliance may be one of the big beneficiaries writes *FleetWatch* correspondent *Paul Collings*.

Tata Motors is acquiring Iveco Group's core commercial vehicle (CV) business for €3.8 billion (R77.9-billion) cash in a move that will create a global trucking titan with around 540 000 units sold annually, €22 billion (R451.2-billion) in revenues and manufacturing and assembly footprints across Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa.

The deal, set to close in Q2 2026 pending regulatory approvals, will see Iveco's defence arm 'spun off' before Tata pays €14.10 (R289,63) a share, plus an 'extraordinary' dividend from the defense arm sale worth an estimated €5.5 (R112,98) to €6.0 (R123.25) per share. (Rand values based on current exchange rate).

Iveco's board is unanimous, major shareholder Exor is backing it with its 27.06% stake and Tata has full financing secured and ready to roll.

## Strategic wins for all stakeholders

Tata chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran calls the move "a logical next step... to compete on a truly global basis with two strategic home markets in India and Europe."

According to the Tata/Iveco media release, the planned deal would unite two players whose product portfolios and capabilities fit

▲ Top Left: Tata Motors will pay cash for Iveco's commercial vehicle division.

together with almost no overlap in industrial or geographic reach.

Iveco chair Suzanne Heywood says the buyout unites "two businesses with a shared vision for sustainable mobility" and strengthens "the security of employment and industrial footprint of Iveco Group as a whole."

By pooling supplier networks, the partnership aims to accelerate the roll-out of innovative, sustainable mobility solutions to customers worldwide. Management insists that both companies' industrial footprints and workforce communities will remain intact, a factor they say will smooth the integration and preserve local strengths.

Girish Wagh, Tata's Executive Director, states that the combination "unlocks new avenues for operational excellence, product innovation and customer-centric solutions...delivering sustainable transport solutions aligned with global megatrends."

In an industry undergoing rapid change, the move marks a strategic shift for both sides. The merged group would stand on a broader, more stable global platform, gaining the scale to spread capital investment over higher volumes and tap operating efficiencies that cut cash flow volatility. It would also open new ground for Iveco Group's FPT powertrain division to push its technology advantage even further.

Iveco CEO Olof Persson adds that the merger will "accelerate innovation in zero-emission

▲ Top Right: Iveco Uptaspit mosapiet aceplendae nis ipsa venditios simus

transport" - a nod to Iveco's push into carbon-neutral trucks powered by battery-electric, bio-LNG and hydrogen fuel cells.

For South African fleet buyers, the relevance is clear. With Iveco and Tata already present in our market, along with Tata's global reach, the sourcing and specification of future trucks could shift in ways that deliver new benefits for Southern African truck fleet customers.

**Editor's comment:** The next decade's trucks will not just be about power and payload - they'll be about emissions, efficiency and where the balance of industrial power lies. An Indian-Italian alliance inside a growing BRICS bloc is a sign of that shift. The final details are some time away but South African truck operators should keep an eye on how this new partnership unfolds in terms of meeting their specific needs, including 'green' trucks. Should the supply lines, the specs and the prices start to change favourably, those who are alert could well benefit.

The key, however, will be the merging of cultures. We all remember the Daimler/Chrysler deal which, while lauded at the time as one of the biggest ever seen, ended in the deal being scuppered with both companies eventually exiting from the deal and going their separate ways. One of the major difficulties was eating a hamburger and sauerkraut from the same plate. They just didn't mix well. Now we're going to see curry and pasta. Sure, they might go together if you toss them up well but, let's see. One thing is for sure: We didn't see this one coming. How the trucking world is changing. □





# Hino SA forges ahead with fuel-saving Hino 300 Hybrid

**G**reener trucking in our country is gathering momentum as OEMs expand their product ranges to reduce emissions.

Hino South Africa is pressing ahead with its decarbonisation strategy by expanding the local field trials of its Hino 300 Hybrid trucks, marking another milestone in the brand's push towards new energy vehicle (NEV) adoption. The trial units, combining a full-size 4-litre Euro 6 diesel with electric drive assistance, are being tested with selected customers to gather hard data on real-world performance, fuel savings and user interest.

The move builds on work already underway with Namlog Logistics, where initial hybrids have been running since 2023 out of the Toyota Africa Parts Centre in Ekurhuleni.

"The balance between cost, range, payload, maintenance and resale are all critical measures when

determining what technology works best for specific applications and that is why we are trialing several Hino 300 Hybrid trucks with customers to evaluate these factors locally," says Itumeleng Segage, general manager of Hino SA.

As emissions targets tighten globally, the trials feed into Toyota's wider NEV roadmap, underpinned by Hino's decades-long commitment

to multi-pathway innovation across hybrid, electric, CNG and hydrogen powertrains.

"Hino Motors of Japan has been involved for many years in programmes to cut emissions and lower fuel consumption as part of its commitment to a cleaner environment in both the manufacturing of its trucks and in their operation. This multi pathway move towards carbon neutrality has resulted in Hino developing and testing a variety of power train solutions, ranging from compressed natural gas to hydrogen to diesel-electric hybrids and battery electric vehicles," explains Segage.

## A stepping-stone to eco-friendly deliveries

The Hino 300 Hybrid is already proving popular in Australia as that country faces the challenge of Euro VI emission legislation being imposed from November this year. A recent 300 km test on the Bathurst race circuit and surrounding streets, replicating the conditions for a local delivery operation, showed fuel savings of up to 24% for the Wide Cab variants and 22% for the Standard Cab.

▼ The Hino Hybrid battery pack works in conjunction with the diesel engine.



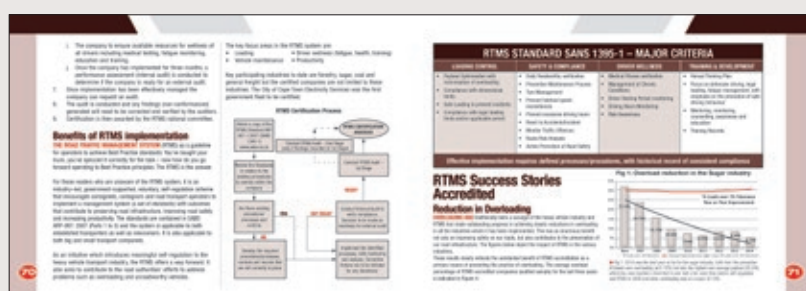
“A test run by journalists from GoAuto, an Australian motor industry publication, obtained similar fuel savings. In their case the saving was 21.1%. Unlike many hybrid passenger cars which downsize engine capacity, Hino keeps the full-size diesel engine for the 300 Hybrid to ensure a long working life and under-stressed powertrain. An electric motor is nestled between the clutch and gearbox, working in parallel with the diesel engine to offer assistance that leads to improved efficiency and reduced carbon dioxide emissions,” says Segage.

The diesel engine and electric motor combined produce 111 kW of power and 470 Nm of torque, with maximum torque delivered as low as 1 200 r/min. The Hino 300 Hybrid uses a six-speed automated manual transmission (AMT), which can be manually overridden by the driver if required.

The Hino 300 Hybrid has the same standard features as the other 300 models, including air conditioning, AM/FM radio, electric windows, two airbags, and daytime running lights.

“We are very enthusiastic about the value of hybrid technology in many of the operations that suit the 300 Series, such as urban and city-to-city deliveries. We are therefore keenly looking forward to the results of these local trials and the feedback from the customers who have them on loan,” concludes Segage.

**Editor's Comment:** Hino's move to expand its hybrid trials on South African roads is both timely and telling. With global regulations tightening and fuel costs rising, fleet operators need real-world data to make informed choices, and Hino is giving them just that. Crucially, the decision to retain a full-sized diesel in the 300 Hybrid shows an understanding of local operating conditions, where durability and payload still matter as much as emissions. If the trial results echo those seen in Australia, hybrid freight carriers could gain serious traction in the short-haul segment, offering operators a cleaner alternative without the leap to full electrification. □



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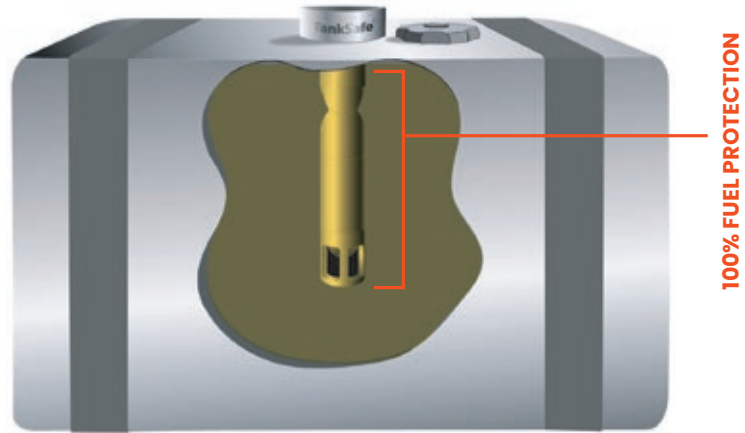


# Fuel theft

## The silent killer of fleet profitability



**By Ken Bailey, MD,  
TankSafe South Africa**



▲ The TankSafe® 'float valve' ensures chamber remains empty so no fuel can be skimmed.

**F**uel is the single biggest operating expense for most transporters – up to 45% of running costs. Yet despite its importance, diesel theft continues largely unchecked. On average, South African operators lose 50 litres per truck per week. That's more than R33 000 per truck per year and for large fleets the figure runs into millions. This is not a side issue. It's a direct assault on profitability.

Theft doesn't always make headlines. Most of it happens quietly through "skimming" – the

small, regular removal of fuel, often during or after refuelling, to avoid detection.

### Detection isn't prevention

Errant drivers or depot staff use sender units or drain plugs as their entry points. Because the stolen amounts look minor on paper, the crime slips past the books until the cumulative losses become crippling. By then the money is gone and accountability is hard to pin down.

Operators have turned to fuel level sensors, telematics and cameras. These tools are valuable

### Unprotected fuel tank

► This photo shows how easy it is to access fuel by removing the fuel level sensor on a truck diesel tank. This is done by hand without any tools or damage so basically undetectable but could be repeated daily.



## PREVENTION | FUEL THEFT



### Sabotaged Anti-Siphon bases

▲ When price becomes an issue manufacturers choose alternatives that can be costly mistakes. It's important to keep inspecting your security devices.

for monitoring, but they only tell you theft has happened once the diesel is already gone. They don't prevent siphoning or tampering at the source. And that is where the battle needs to be fought.

It's telling that leading OEMs are now starting to act. Fuel-security devices are being specified as

standard fitment on new trucks. The industry is shifting from detection to prevention – and with good reason.

### Seal it or lose it

At TankSafe South Africa we've built technology to do just that. Optimum closes the tank after refuelling, blocking siphoning, spillage

**Did you know**  
On average operators lose 50 litres per truck per week... that's around R33 000 per truck per year.

and overfilling. SenderSafe protects the fuel sender and pickup line, while DrainSafe locks the drain plug.

Together these devices seal every access point thieves can exploit. They install quickly, require no maintenance and usually pay for themselves within months through fuel savings alone.

Fleet managers are already under relentless pressure from rising costs, shrinking margins and fierce competition. Allowing diesel theft to continue unchecked is not an option. It is not a nuisance. It is a daily drain on your bottom line.

The real question is whether you can afford to keep losing thousands of litres of diesel every year. Fuel theft is real. It's constant. And it's costing this industry dearly. □

## TANKSAFE® OPTIMUM VS GENERIC DESIGN

### TANKSAFE® OPTIMUM

- Stops overfilling
- Stops diesel spills
- Stops all diesel theft
- Stops water ingress
- Fast filling: >140 litres per minute
- Compatible with OEM cap



After filling a float valve blocks off the fuel in the tank

### Generic Anti-siphon device



- Protects fuel below base
- Base restricts filling speed
- Doesn't stop small pipes
- Issues with water ingress
- Supplied with own cap





◀ The Foton eTruckmate was one of the vehicles on display and available for delegates to test drive at the EVolution event. It has a range of up to 280km, with 60kW of power and 220Nm of torque.



▲ Long-haul fleets can get a taste of electric truck capabilities by investing in a light e-truck for depot chores. Some new names and models like this LCV from DSFK were on display. The Chinese are here.

## Fleet electrification gains momentum

**T**ruck fleet electrification is edging into South African operations. From retail delivery vans to long-haul trials, the shift is real, albeit in its early stages. Infrastructure gaps, cost pressures and operational questions remain but WesBank, in partnership with FNB, tackled these issues head-on recently at the first 'EVolution' event.

Hosted at Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit, medium and large fleet operators drove the latest battery electric, hybrid electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. They heard how to finance EVs (electric vehicles), learned from early adopters and connected with suppliers across the EV value chain.

"Fleet electrification in South Africa is still in its developmental stages, with much of the current work focused on pilot projects across various industries. Our EVolution event provided a platform to address the uncertainties that hinder widespread adoption and

offer practical insights based on local and global experiences," said Linda Cele, WesBank Products Head Key Accounts & Partnerships: Fleet Management and Leasing.

### EV testing in real-world operations

Pilots showcased at the event included logistics fleets in



▲ Linda Cele, WesBank's Head of Fleet Management and Leasing speaking as a pannelist at the EVolution event which was intended to provide a platform to address the uncertainties that hinder widespread adoption of EVs.

Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, retailers testing electric vans, mining companies trialing buses and heavy-duty units and municipalities exploring e-buses for public transport. Delegates also saw tools to track total cost of ownership, cut emissions and use telematics for efficiency gains.

Global momentum framed the local picture. The International Council on Clean Transportation says many governments are phasing out ICE sales. GreenCape points to rising fuel prices making EVs more competitive. Worldwide EV sales hit 17 million in 2024, up from 14 million in 2023.

"WesBank is proud of its efforts in moving the industry forward. We remain committed to supporting South African businesses in their transition to electric mobility, providing the expertise, financial solutions and industry connections necessary to navigate this transformative journey successfully," concluded Cele.

**Editor's Comment:** In truck fleet procurement, caution is often the better part of efficiency. Jump too soon and you risk costly missteps. Wait too long and the market will move without you. The smart money is on careful pilots now, building knowledge and readiness before the tipping point arrives. □



# DHL, Volvo and Unilever join forces

**E**vidently, there's no stopping truck fleet electrification programmes in South Africa's road freight sector. While EV (electric vehicle) infrastructure, cost and policy lag far behind Europe or North America, the momentum is undeniable. Every pilot, every electric truck test on local roads pushes the industry closer to the net-zero target. DHL Supply Chain's latest move with Unilever and Volvo Trucks is exactly that - a signal that the future is edging its way to greener operations.

Last month DHL Supply Chain launched an electric vehicle pilot in South Africa involving Africa's first fully electric Volvo FMX 6x4 truck-tractor coupled to an 18-metre superlink curtain-sider trailer.

The vehicle is already running Unilever distribution routes, its performance and economics to be tracked against traditional

diesel fleets. It's a bold step into uncharted territory for local logistics, testing what is possible in an environment where charging points are few and far between.

## Commitment despite the hurdles

According to Bremer Pauw, Managing Director of DHL Supply Chain Africa: "This pilot underscores DHL's commitment to sustainable logistics and transport solutions despite infrastructure challenges in Africa. While limitations remain in scaling EV solutions, strategic partnerships like this enable us to test and capitalise on the technologies available today, proving that low-carbon logistics can be possible, even in emerging markets."

Volvo Trucks has long been a proponent of cleaner technology. Its Euro 5 trucks have been on South

## Top photo

▲ The fully electric Volvo FMX 6x4 truck-tractor coupled to an 18-metre superlink curtain-sider trailer will be benchmarked against its diesel counterparts in the DHL fleet.

## Inset

▲ The 'green team' behind the Volvo FMX comprising specialists from DHL, Volvo Trucks SA and Unilever; with DHL's Bremer Pauw (right) and Volvo Trucks SA's Eric Parry (second from right).

African roads since 2012, giving operators an edge over the broadly Euro 2 local standard. The electric FMX is a step further, bringing the company's global advances in emissions reduction into the regional market.

"As part of our sustainability commitment, we've proactively introduced cleaner transport solutions, including assembling Euro 5 trucks locally ahead of regulation," says Eric Parry, Senior Manager Sustainable Solutions, Volvo Trucks South Africa. "This pilot reflects our belief that collaboration is key to accelerating Africa's transition to sustainable freight transport." ► 66



## ▶ 65 Testing, charging and benchmarking

For now, the FMX superlink will run standard logistics routes with charging handled by Aeversa infrastructure at Unilever depots. DHL's longer-term objective is to link this to renewable energy, closing the loop on carbon reduction.

Data from the pilot will be benchmarked against DHL's Euro 5 diesel fleet, which already cuts greenhouse gas emissions significantly compared to the prevailing national standard.

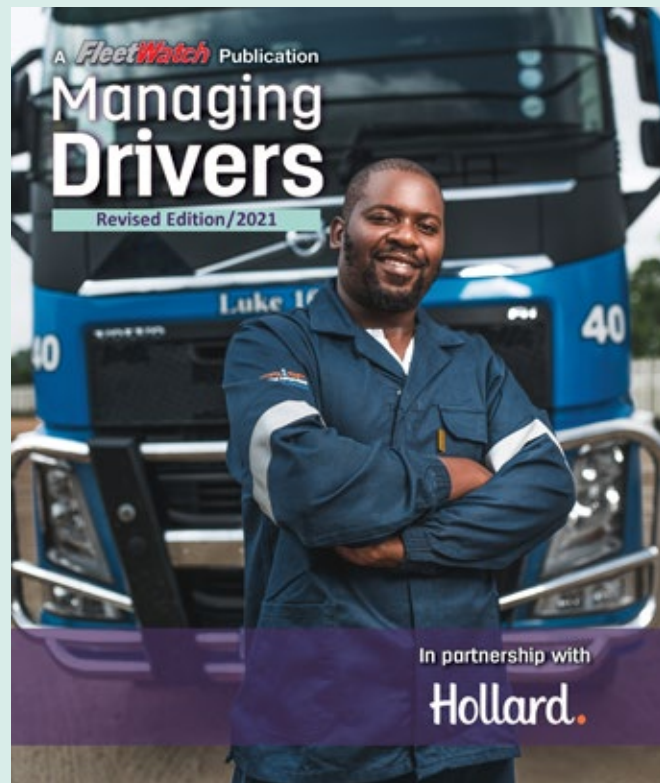
Unilever also has its eyes fixed on net zero. “Unilever is committed to achieving net-zero emissions across our operations by 2039. Collaborations such as this pilot with DHL and Volvo Trucks are crucial steps toward reaching our sustainability objectives, enabling us to test and implement innovative transportation solutions that foster a greener supply chain,” states Simphiwe Dlamini, National Transport Manager, Unilever South Africa.

## Shaping what comes next

For now, one electric FMX towing a superlink across South African highways is enough to show the future isn't waiting - it's already moving.

“Outcomes from this initiative will shape future sustainability strategies and potentially accelerate the broader adoption of electric trucks within DHL’s operations across Africa,” concludes Pauw. □

**Editor's note:** For the entire African trucking industry, this pilot is more than a technical trial - it's a wake-up call. If the data proves positive, the onus shifts squarely to government policymakers and finance houses to clear the roadblocks that stand in the way of wider EV adoption. Charging infrastructure, grid stability and investment incentives all need urgent attention if Africa is to keep pace with global transport trends. What DHL, Volvo and Unilever have shown is that the technology works. To the industry at large - a heads-up - the future of road freight will not be diesel forever.



## training drivers

## The importance of training



## The importance of training

**S**hould licensed drivers with reasonable experience be trained and recertified at regular intervals? The answer to this question must be an resounding YES!

trucking operation. A 100-vehicle fleet could be foregoing \$1.22 million in the case of 8-ton payload volume vans and \$6.24 million rand in the case of 36-ton payload inter-link sets.

*Driver recertification*

**Driver evaluation** is an effective training and motivational technique to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of drivers.

**Critique for evaluating drivers**

Each member of the driving unit should have a personal rating scale and the assessment criteria. The rating scale should provide sufficient information to formulate objective non-discriminatory criteria to evaluate the driver's performance. The criteria should be based on the following factors:

- **Attitude** is a driving skill. The attitude is a driver's mood, keeping to the road, and the attitude of the driver towards the road with concern for other road users are essential elements.
- **The cost of not training** Less serious as a result of ill-discipline, the driver is a lack of awareness of the importance of the knowledge of the drivers. Drivers unwittingly and often at their own trading operation, using the wrong technique, the driver is a lack of knowledge of the road rules. A popular tracking table, Table 1 illustrates the knock on effect that a driver's lack of knowledge of the road rules can have on the training of other drivers. Please note below.
- **This is a puny for discipline purposes.** The figures are not correct as they vary over time.

The knock on expenses depicted below should be seen in less of a negative light.

The important task of assessing the costs and evaluating drivers must be done by a competent, objective and experienced person or organisation

should be seen as loss of profit in any

disciplines them must put into practice

**Table 1 – An example of costs imposed by untreated drivers**

Expense	9 km/hourly litter rate	24 km/hourly litter rate
Fuel	100 000 km a year	200 000 km a year
Maintenance & Repairs	1 662	7 700
Tyres	457	2 068
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102 059</b>	<b>422 456</b>
<b>Average additional CPK</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>21.2</b>

**Assumptions:** Increased fuel consumption is based on 130km/200km at 90, 20 per km/h and a 5% increase in maintenance, repair and tyre costs. The assumptions exclude fuel theft, abuse driving, horn blowing, crashes, accidents, etc. Please note: Given that above are mostly for illustration purposes only, it is not intended to be used as a basis for decision making.

## the driver's job

### Unpacking and defining the driver's job

**W**hile it's the cause of panic in South Africa to recognize truck drivers as "hazardous workers," it is considered a crime in the United States for the industrial truck driver leaving a job in the U.S. without giving the "usual employment warning." They must not work for their employers again during any of their three working hours—either for long periods, or with reduced and variable equipment and working conditions to common use. This factor alone, says the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the most important indicator, with a guaranteed close relationship to the other two: the other transportation method (such as passenger or cargo train) and the nature of the other transportation method (such as a freight train).

the same as the other transport modes (car, bus and rail).

Now, driving a vehicle for a long time does not mean you are a professional driver. It does not make a person a safe, courteous or reliable driver. To ensure that your drivers understand all aspects of the job you want them to do and how you would like them to do it, you need to analyse and define the driving job in some detail. This is the first question you will need to ask before you can answer the other questions you will need to ask to deliver the job. This is a true question you are responsible for a small but key part of the business. Below are a series of whether you should consider asking

these important attributes need to be defined:

- Are physical requirements and age a consideration?
- What level of training is needed to do the job properly?

When a detailed description of the driving job is in place, it becomes easier to decide on the key attributes and characteristics you should be looking for when compiling a job description (position profile) and appropriate driver selection procedures. A job description and driver selection procedures are your decisions based on face value and your feelings. ➤

**the description of the driving job makes it easier to decide on key attributes and characteristics needed for the position profile.**

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▲ The Charge stations will have the amenities of world-class truck stops.

## CHARGE gets R100-m DBSA/Absa backing

A major boost for the roll-out of a charging network for battery electric vehicles has just arrived with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) committing R100-million to Zero Carbon Charge (CHARGE) - the company rolling out a nationwide off-grid e-truck charging network.

If South Africa is serious about putting electric trucks on the road, the first step is building a reliable charging backbone along the country's busiest freight corridors. The N3 between Johannesburg and Durban carries the bulk of the nation's logistics traffic and is an obvious starting point. Without fast, accessible charging here, the transition to zero-emission freight simply cannot happen.

The Development Bank of Southern Africa and Zero Carbon Charge have signed definitive agreements confirming DBSA's equity investment of R100-million into CHARGE. This follows DBSA's

initial approval in April, subject to due diligence and final agreements. That process is now complete, clearing the way for immediate implementation.

"At the DBSA, we are committed to backing catalytic projects that stimulate both economic growth and societal benefit," says Spiwe Sibanda from the DBSA. "CHARGE's off-grid charging model is a future-proof solution that supports the expansion of South Africa's electric vehicle market while strengthening consumer trust in green energy and mobility."

**The real test will be on the N3, where uptime is key and reliability is non-negotiable**

Patrick O'Leary  
FleetWatch Editor

### N3 first, then the N1

CHARGE is South Africa's first and only company building a nationwide network of entirely off-grid, solar-powered ultra-fast EV charging stations. Each site is designed to provide reliable renewable energy, boost consumer confidence in electric mobility and create inclusive economic opportunities for rural landowners and local communities.

With DBSA's funding in place, construction will now focus on the N3 corridor linking Johannesburg and Durban, followed by the N1 corridor from Johannesburg to Cape Town. These routes will form the backbone of South Africa's renewable-powered transport infrastructure.

The financial closure process was supported by Absa's Corporate and Investment Banking Division, which advised CHARGE through its two-year journey to bankability.

"Absa believes in the future of sustainability and CHARGE embodies this vision," states the Head of Advisory at Absa CIB. "Their model aligns with our values and South Africa's long-term economic prospects, which is why we are proud to have supported this landmark transaction."

Reflecting on the milestone, CHARGE Co-Founder Joubert Roux concludes: "We are grateful to both the DBSA and Absa for their unwavering support in helping us reach this milestone. Our first station was built as a self-funded proof of concept to showcase our dream to all, and today, this investment validates our business model as the future of South Africa's green transport infrastructure." □

**Editor's Comment:** The move by DBSA to back CHARGE is more than a funding deal - it is a signal that the country's financial heavyweights now see electric freight as inevitable. For the trucking industry, the real test will come on the N3, where uptime is everything and reliability is non-negotiable. If these solar-powered stations prove they can keep rigs rolling between Durban and Johannesburg, the rest of the network will follow. It's a bold step, and one the industry cannot afford to ignore.



# A win for SA Harvest

## Delivering 22 million kg of rescued food



**A**cross South Africa, trucks are proving that the nation's roads can deliver more than freight - they can deliver food security. SA Harvest's award-winning reverse-logistics network is turning millions of kilograms of rescued food into sustenance for hundreds of thousands of needy South Africans. Fittingly, its efforts were recently honoured with a prestigious pan-African ASCEA (Africa Supply Chain Excellence Awards) accolade.

With South African truck fleets stepping up to keep the SA Harvest supply chain moving, everything from donated back-haul capacity to temperature-controlled deliveries are seeing truckers deliver 22 million kilograms of rescued food to hungry communities while cutting waste along the way. This is supply chain work with a heart, and a reminder that logistics can change lives.

ASCEA has recognised SA Harvest's tech-enabled reverse-logistics model with the programme's premier Judges' Spotlight Award (the single overall award across all categories) together with the Humanitarian & Health Supply Chain Management Award, jointly with VillageReach. The awards drew more than 200 submissions from 48 African countries, with organisers positioning the Spotlight as the top entry of the night.

### Recognition for a system, not a moment

What impressed judges was not a one-off project but a system: an orchestration layer across the food value chain that intercepts surplus food at source - from farms and manufacturers to distributors and retailers - and reroutes it, safely and cost-effectively, to vetted community-based organisations

### From left clockwise:

- ▲ A Time Link Cargo rig arrives for loading at an SA Harvest warehouse in Cape Town.
- ▲ Waterford Carriers collecting from Johannesburg.
- ▲ Representing SA Harvest's winning team – Cassandra Potgieter, Victor Mpofo, Janine Levy, Shelly Abbey, Eugene Kriel and Ozzy Nel.
- ▲ A DSV truck joins the food security drive.

(CBOs) at zero cost to those frontline partners.

The model links donors, logistics providers, storage and last-mile partners into one cohesive ecosystem, using digital matching and route optimisation to reduce empty kilometres and keep nutritious food moving.

That operating system now runs at national scale. SA Harvest co-ordinates three primary warehouses and a partner-fleet footprint that reaches all nine provinces, integrating donated back-haul and temperature-controlled capacity to expand the range of foods moved reliably.

Over the past two years, the organisation has doubled national cold-storage capacity and is piloting greenhouse growing and dehydration technologies to extend shelf life and stabilise supply at community level. In the past year, more than 100 CBOs have been trained in food safety, storage and logistics.

### Outcomes that validate the mechanism

Measured outcomes demonstrate the model's effectiveness. The network supports 243 CBOs and reaches 100 782 people every day. Cumulative climate benefits include approximately 53 000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided through landfill diversion and around 20 billion litres of embedded water conserved through food rescue. Logistics efficiencies add a further estimated 10 000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided annually. In parallel, removing the cost of food to partners has unlocked roughly R210-million in wholesale value (over R314-million at retail equivalence) that CBOs can redirect to essential services.

### Agility proven under stress

The model's resilience has been tested in crisis. During the 2021 Durban unrest, SA Harvest repurposed a major venue into an emergency logistics hub and coordinated partners to distribute more than half a million meals within 48 hours - a demonstration of surge capacity and collaborative control-tower execution that

now informs standard operating playbooks.

"The judges recognised SA Harvest for operational excellence and social impact, combining disciplined reverse logistics with a people-first approach to serve vulnerable communities at scale. It's a best-in-class example of supply chain for good," said Garry Marshall, Head Judge, Africa Supply Chain Excellence Awards.

### An invitation to scale with partners

With peer recognition spotlighting the system rather than the silverware, SA Harvest is focused on scaling what works. "Recognition from our peers matters because it validates the logistics engine behind our mission," says Ozzy Nel, Chief Operations Officer (COO) at SA Harvest. "But the real story is what comes next.

"Thousands of community organisations are already waiting to be brought into the network. The challenge (and the opportunity) is to match that need by rescuing more food, underpinned by the right mix of warehouse space, cold chain reach and smart fleet capacity. When those pieces come together, the model doesn't just move food; it multiplies impact, cuts emissions, and strengthens communities at scale."

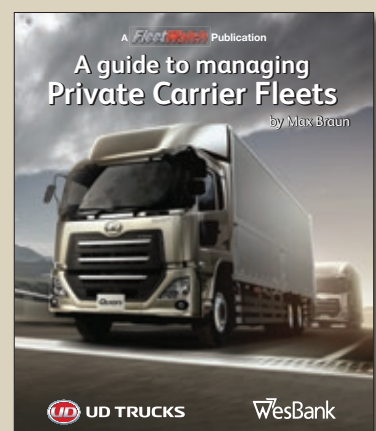
As of August 2025, SA Harvest has rescued 22 million kilograms of food, reflecting steady growth of a model designed for replication with the right partners. □

**Editor's Comment:** Truckers, fleets and logistics partners - SA Harvest needs you. Every back-haul, every refrigerated delivery, every kilometre counts in turning what would be waste food into wonderful meals that tackle hunger at grassroots level. Join the movement, extend the reach and be part of a supply chain that doesn't just deliver goods - it delivers life-giving nutrients to communities across South Africa. And it's a big thumbs up to those trucking companies who are already volunteering their services.

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◀ Mathe Group CEO, Dr Mehran Zarrebini with processed steel from truck tyres.

▼ Mathe Group's Minenhle Mkhize and Dr Mehran Zarrebini, CEO of Mathe Group, inspect de-beaded steel wire from the side wall of a truck tyre.



# Turning scrap tyres into steel

**E**very worn truck tyre on South Africa's roads carries more than rubber - it carries steel, carbon and potential. Mathe Group is showing how careful recycling can turn that potential into value for the environment, the transport industry and the economy.

The Hammarsdale-based radial truck tyre recycler has invested millions in a world-first clean steel mill, automated packaging line and de-beading machines, enabling hundreds of tons of steel to be exported each week to India and South Korea.

Mathe Group CEO, Dr Mehran Zarrebini, says that the clean steel investment, "will boost earnings." Up until now, steel - around 30% of each tyre - "has been an unavoidable by-product that had to be removed before tyres could be reduced to rubber crumb for re-use. This will now become a valued second income stream, ultimately growing export earnings and creating more jobs."

The upgrade changes the entire recycling process. Traditional de-beading damaged the steel beads,

making them difficult to sell. The new machinery removes the entire bead free of rubber while keeping its geometry intact, allowing the steel to be used in blasting applications or sold at three times the price of scrap metal.

"The added bonus of additional rubber removed boosts the amount of rubber recovered from each tyre," Dr Zarrebini adds.

The first two de-beaders are already operational, with a third on the way. Older oil-driven equipment is being retired, reducing emissions and maintenance costs.

"We are looking at material that could be potentially used in the local steel market which is under huge pressure. Right now, no steel extracted from tyres is sold locally," he explains.

## Adapting to overcome tough trading conditions

Cleaning previously took place in India, but the new in-house mill will reduce rubber contamination from 10% to less than 2% and deposit packaged steel directly into shipping

containers for export via Durban port.

Increased capacity means 108 tons - at least four containers - will leave Hammarsdale each week. Dr Zarrebini says: "The new steel processing system cuts a lot of cost from the system and adds both efficiency and a further 8% of rubber crumb to the process. Although steel wasn't initially Mathe's main income stream, with the escalating cost and complexity of doing business, it has become an important part of the business."

The steel extraction equipment is scheduled to be fully operational by January 2026, marking a milestone for Mathe Group and for South Africa's tyre recycling sector. □

**Editor's Comment:** By recovering clean steel and additional rubber crumb, the company is supporting circular economy principles, creating jobs, strengthening the freight ecosystem and contributing to export earnings - proving that environmental responsibility and commercial success can drive each other forward.



# Port reform with no rivalry is no reform at all

**D**espite government's intentions to grant long-term terminal concessions to private operators, one leading economist is warning that unless healthy competition is injected into the Ports system, we'll simply be swapping old monopolies for new ones.



**by Ryan Hawthorne  
Economist**

Ports are where the global economy meets the local road freight sector. For South Africa's hauliers, delays at container terminals translate directly into truck downtime, contract backlogs, escalated driver and load risk, plus increased overall business costs. Yet despite the critical role our ports play in trade and investment, they remain among the least efficient in the world. That's not just a nuisance - it's an existential threat to our economy.

Dr Ryan Hawthorne, director at Acacia Economics, is raising a red flag. Speaking at the 43rd Southern African Transport Conference, he stated: "If we're simply replacing public monopolies with private ones, we're missing the opportunity to build a more competitive, efficient port system that truly serves the country's interests."

## **Is government 'commitment to reform' for real?**

His concern highlights how the National Ports Authority (NPA), still legally part of Transnet, has awarded

25-year leases to single operators - often in joint ventures with Transnet Port Terminals itself.

"Monopolies tend to charge more, deliver less, and innovate slowly," says Hawthorne. "We're seeing a pattern of partial privatisation rather than real reform."

Instead of unlocking benefits for port users, the current model risks reinforcing dominant positions with new stakeholders. "While private-sector

participation is a welcome step, it risks becoming a missed opportunity if it doesn't introduce genuine competition," he warns.

Durban alone is expected to expand its container-handling

**We have got the capacity. What we need now is the courage to implement real reform.**

Ryan Hawthorne



▲ To ensure optimum efficiencies under the new port privatisation dispensation, Cape Town port concessionaires should compete with rival concessionaires operating other ports in South Africa says Dr Ryan Hawthorne, director at Acacia Economics.

capacity to more than 11 million TEUs. That, says Hawthorne, opens the door to a much more competitive model. "Ports of similar size internationally to Durban's current capacity host four or more terminal operators competing on quality and cost," he explains. "There's no reason South Africa can't follow suit."

The legal foundation already exists. The Ports Act of 2005 calls for the structural separation of the NPA from Transnet and mandates transparent, competitive access to port infrastructure. But the critical step - making the NPA fully independent - has yet to happen. "If the NPA were truly independent," says Hawthorne, "it would have an incentive to lease space to multiple terminal operators - not preserve the dominance of its sister company."

In the short term, Hawthorne argues for practical reforms. "We need to complete the structural separation of the NPA from Transnet, as envisioned in the Ports Act. This would allow the NPA to

operate independently and invest in expanding port capacity and enabling rival terminal operators, rather than protecting Transnet's downstream interests," he notes.

### A call for competition assurances

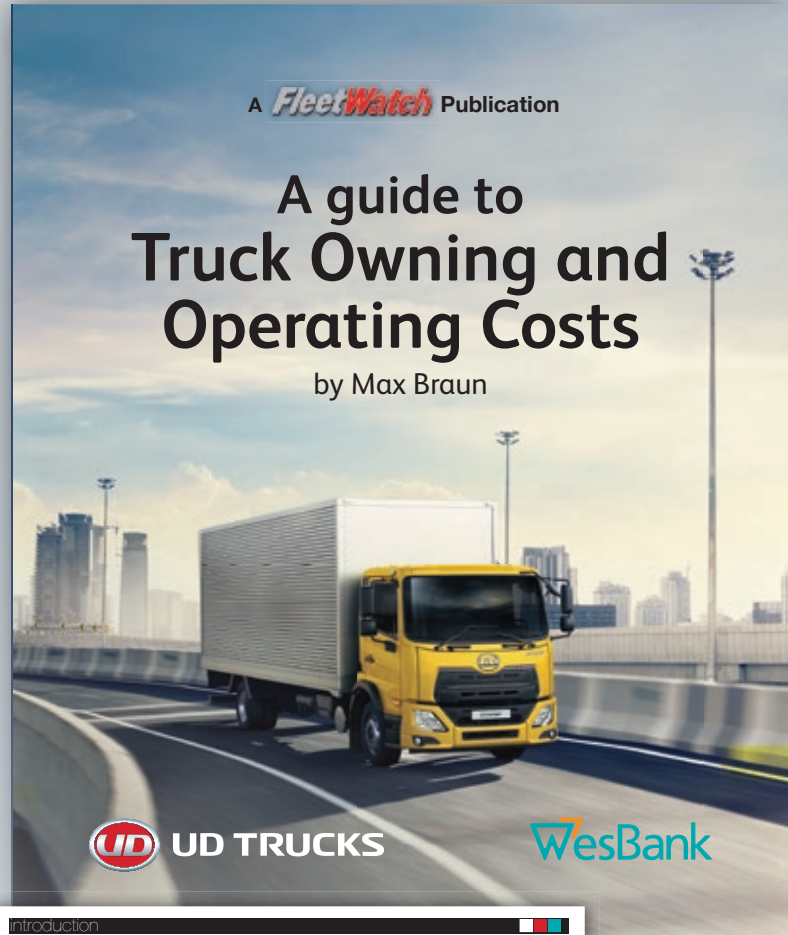
He's also calling on the Minister of Transport to issue a policy directive requiring competition assessments in all future concession processes. The new Transport Economic Regulator (TER), he says, should be empowered to review and, if necessary, amend monopoly concession agreements. "The Competition Commission could also be called upon to investigate exclusionary practices in port operations, including abuse of dominance or refusal to grant access to essential infrastructure," he proposes.

Looking ahead, Hawthorne urges a return to inter-port rivalry, citing the era before the 1910 formation of South African Railways and Harbours when ports like Cape Town and Durban competed for shipping traffic.

"We need to stop thinking of South Africa's ports as a single block," he says. "Independent port authorities promoting competition within and between ports could drive the efficiency gains we desperately need."

Hawthorne concludes: "The current model is broken. If we don't introduce competition - both within and between our ports - we'll continue to pay the price in lost trade, higher consumer prices and missed investment opportunities. We've got the capacity. What we need now is the courage to reform." □

**Editor's Comment:** *FleetWatch* agrees. True reform means shaking up entrenched monopolies, not reinforcing them. If we want faster, more reliable port operations, the solution isn't just private investment - it's proper competition. The trucking sector would certainly welcome the improved efficiencies that would spill over into their operations.



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◀ For now, this is the status quo – trucks still doing the heavy lifting.

# Doors open to private freight-by-rail operators

It's been a long time coming but at last the doors to South Africa's freight rail network are opening to private freight-by-rail operators. Standing before the media in Pretoria, Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy called it "a significant step in our rail reform journey" as Transnet announced the outcome of its slot allocation process to new private Train Operating Companies (TOCs). Now, how will this impact SA's trucking industry? *FleetWatch* correspondent **Paul Collings** reports.

This makes open access to freight rail a reality in our country. It will contribute to a more efficient, reliable and sustainable rail system that can promote inclusive growth and ensure job retention and job creation," Creecy said.

For trucking, that statement is worth a pause. A more functional rail system is not the death knell for road freight. Rather, it has the potential to ease the chronic congestion on our highways, reduce wear and tear on long-haul fleets

and open space for road freight operators to improve service levels where rail cannot compete.

## Corridors and commodities

The detail is hard to ignore. Of the 25 companies that applied, 11 made the cut, with allocations across six key corridors. Creecy outlined them with precision: "North Corridor: six new entrants, 15 routes for transportation of coal and chrome... Container Corridor: four new entrants, five routes for transportation of containers, coal, sugar."

The variety signals more than just iron ore and manganese trains. Containers and fuel feature too - loads traditionally fought over by rail and road.

TRIM, the newly defined Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager, estimates the new entrants will move an additional 20 million tonnes of freight per year from 2026/27. That plugs directly into government's lofty goal of hitting 250 million tons per annum on rail by 2029.

## Impact on trucking

For truckers, the environmental subtext is equally relevant. Creecy stated: "The benefits of third-party access include improving utilisation of the network and thus increasing rail efficiency... reducing the external costs of freight logistics and improving the competitiveness of rail as a more environmentally friendly mode of transport."

Less carbon, less congestion and fewer 56-ton rigs pounding the tar may sound ominous for some in road freight - but let's remember the flip side. Every supply chain still needs road legs for routes not covered by rail. And rail, if it works properly, can cart the really heavy loads on long hauls, effectively complementing the road freight sector.

## Fair competition

The minister stressed fairness in the process: "The evaluation process has been rigorous and was conducted in full compliance with the standards of fairness and transparency."

**Truckers note: Benefits of third-party access are reducing the external costs of freight logistics and improving the competitiveness of rail as a more environment friendly mode of transport.**

Barbara Creecy

Conditional awards now commence, with private operators needing to secure Railway Safety Regulator permits, rolling stock readiness and port offloading capacity. Slot durations vary from one to 10 years, meaning this is not a once-off experiment but a phased embedding of competition into a system long stifled by monopoly.

### The RFA's position

Kevin van der Merwe, Acting CEO of the Road Freight Association, states that the two modes need not be seen as adversaries. "Whether rail is working properly or not, there will always be the need for road freight. First mile, last mile, certain commodities, speed of service, security and flexibility - these are the domains where road freight excels and cannot be replaced by rail."

He emphasised that road has carried the economy through rail's collapse: "Road Freight will continue to ensure that the needs of the economy are met and where rail services are available and efficient, both modes can - and will - complement each other to provide a freight logistics solution for the country."

Importantly, van der Merwe stressed that the RFA is not anti-



**This should not be about road *or* rail but road *and* rail. Together we can build a freight logistics network that drives economic growth, reduces costs and ensures sustainability.**

Kevin van der Merwe  
RFA Acting CEO

rail: "The RFA approves of this move and supports government in getting rail back on track. It is vital that rail is restored to take the pressure off our roads and we are committed to working with rail operators to achieve a balanced, efficient freight system."

He did however, caution against overt optimism: "The danger is that road freight will once again have to carry the load when rail fails, with the resultant costs, congestion and challenges." □

**Editor's Comment:** *FleetWatch* has watched these promises pile up for decades. On paper, this is a breakthrough. Creecy's line that "today's announcement is not just about the allocation of rail slots - it is a step toward a future where our railways drive economic growth, job creation and sustainability" is stirring. But let's be clear: road freight has carried this economy while rail collapsed. Trucking kept the lights on, commodities moving, the ports supplied. Rail reform is welcome, necessary and overdue. If it delivers, it can free trucks from the drudgery of bulk haul and let the road freight sector specialise, innovate and lift safety standards. But we'll believe it when we see the trains run, the slots honoured and the freight actually shifted. Until then, truckers - keep your engines warm.





# Now you can blow the whistle

**W**e often knock the SAPS for their lack of action - and rightfully so." These were the pointed words echoing

across public forums as Police Minister Senzo Mchunu was placed on special leave by President Cyril Ramaphosa following explosive allegations from KwaZulu-Natal's Police Commissioner, General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi.

With public trust in law enforcement already threadbare – and the trucking industry 'gatvol' of the culture of bribery practised by 'some' (not all) cops - the time has arrived for the nation's citizens to blow the whistle on corrupt cops. Two incidents highlighted below highlight the type of action we want to see taken against corrupt cops.

A delivery truck carrying washing powder veered off the road on the R101 near Modimolle and as opportunists began helping themselves to the cargo, a marked SAPS vehicle arrived. Instead of intervening, the two uniformed officers reportedly joined in the theft.

"Reports suggest that the complainant pleaded with them to assist in stopping the looting but instead, the officers allegedly joined in, loading a significant amount (of cargo) into the SAPS vehicle before driving off," said SAPS spokesperson Colonel Malesela Ledwaba.

A subsequent investigation led to a recovery of the goods at one officer's home and linked a SAPS general cleaner to the theft. The three, aged 49 to 55, now face charges of theft and defeating the ends of justice.



▲ The SaferCity app promo: a long overdue but bold initiative from the Gauteng Provincial Joint Operational Centre - a free-to-use citizen empowerment tool to help fight police corruption.

"It is extremely disheartening when those entrusted with upholding the law violate that trust," said Limpopo Commissioner Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe.

## Two cops arrested for extortion

Meanwhile, in Johannesburg, swift action followed a public complaint involving two JMPD officers accused of extortion. According to the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department, a company driver was allegedly coerced to pay R8 000 after being accused of fleeing an accident scene.

Acting on the tip-off, JMPD Internal Affairs traced the officers to a Parktown garage where they were found in possession of R5 340 in unaccounted-for cash. Some of the money was hidden inside their patrol vehicle. Both officers were arrested on the spot for corruption and extortion. JMPD said the internal unit had acted promptly and assured that investigations were ongoing.

With fresh allegations surfacing almost weekly, the criminality within South Africa's policing ranks is drawing sharper national scrutiny.

And as higher-level political figures are implicated in internal power struggles, it is ordinary South Africans who bear the brunt of lawlessness by common thugs and by those in uniform.

## Time to blow the whistle

As top police brass face internal suspensions and street-level officers are caught red-handed, the time for passive outrage is long gone. The need now is for active citizenship - and technology is finally lending a hand.

The Gauteng Provincial Joint Operational Centre (JOC) has confirmed a new avenue for accountability: "Through our collaboration with SaferCity, we are pleased to announce that you can now report police misconduct directly on the SaferCity app," the JOC states.

Developed as a Gauteng Police Board initiative, the app enables citizens to upload photos, videos or audio evidence of wrongdoing by officers, be that bribery, abuse, or dereliction of duty.

Each report is reviewed by the Community Policing Forum and passed on to the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) for action.

But this is more than a reporting tool, claims the JOC. The app offers family location sharing, hotspot warnings, GBV (gender-based violence) and CPF (community policing forum) helpdesks, turning your phone into a real-time personal safety dashboard.

"Whether it's a police officer demanding a bribe or an official turning a blind eye for personal gain, you hold the power to expose law enforcement misconduct," urges the JOC. □

**Editor's Comment:** We at *FleetWatch* fully back this initiative. It's time to lift the veil on bad cops and protect the ones doing it right. Not to mention protecting lives, hard-earned cash and valuable cargo. Truckers - download the SaferCity app now!



◀ **Upping the ante:** (far left) CILTSA president Elvin Harris and Ingrid du Buisson of the Institute for Customs and Freight Forwarding signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at raising professionalism across the sector.

◀ **Collaborative intent:** Elvin Harris (CILTSA), Ingrid du Buisson (ICFF) and Catherine Larkin, executive director (CILTSA).

# CILTSA and ICFF to strengthen SA logistics backbone

In a world where global supply chains face extraordinary risks - from geopolitical instability to climate disruption - the importance of collaboration between industry bodies cannot be overstated. Locally, two respected organisations have stepped forward with a partnership designed to strengthen South Africa's logistics backbone. The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport SA (CILTSA) and the Institute for Customs and Freight Forwarding (ICFF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at raising professionalism across the sector.

The agreement combines CILTSA's reach in transport, logistics and supply chain management with ICFF's specialist knowledge of customs and freight forwarding. The goal is to

improve skills, create clear career pathways and help build an industry that can compete globally.

"This collaboration represents a shared commitment to advancing our industry," says Ingrid du Buisson, CEO of the ICFF. "Instead of working in silos, we are building bridges to collectively take responsibility for ensuring our sector becomes globally competitive and raises its credibility. As an industry that facilitates 95% of South Africa's international trade, our mission is to professionalise this sector, and we look forward to collaborating with the industry to grow SA Inc."

## Broad benefits in disrupted waters

CILTSA President Elvin Harris underscores the point. "By leveraging

our respective strengths, we will be able to solve complex challenges and drive innovation," he says. "This partnership will have a direct and positive impact on students, employees, and professionals across the logistics value chain, ensuring we are better equipped to meet the demands of a dynamic global economy."

For members, the MoU opens up practical benefits: joint events, workshops and webinars, discounted participation rates and the prospect of joint credentialing to elevate professional recognition.

As du Buisson and Harris conclude, the agreement marks "a new era of cooperation, moving beyond traditional boundaries to create a more integrated and credible logistics ecosystem in South Africa." □

**Editor's Comment:** South Africa's logistics system is under pressure from every angle - regulatory gaps, skills shortages, rising costs and global volatility. If professional bodies can pool resources and create pathways that lift standards across the board, the entire supply chain gains resilience. What CILTSA and the ICFF are signalling here is that it's time for the logistics industry in this country to build intra-sector cohesion - a message worth backing.



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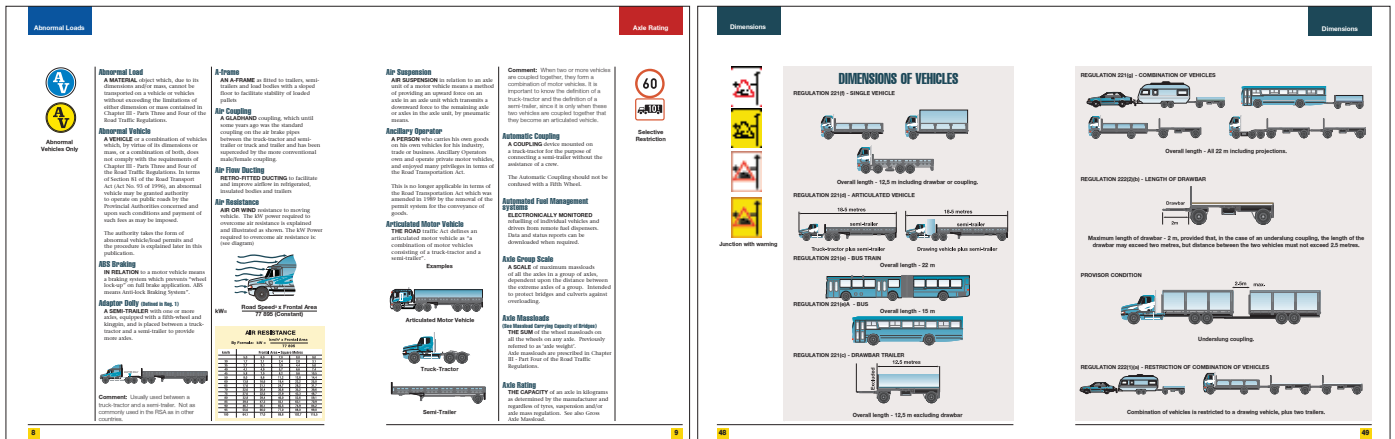
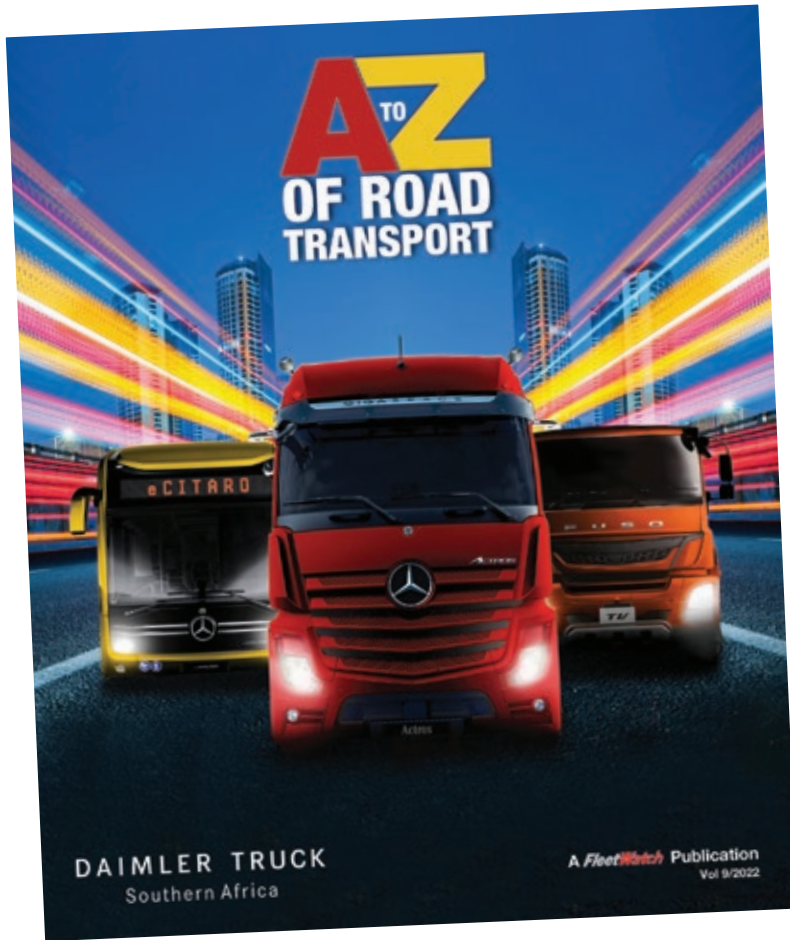





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## Tariff Wars

# Trailer demand in Western Europe cut by 50%

**F**leet operators in Southern Africa should be paying close attention to what's unfolding across Europe's road freight corridors where trucks carry 70% of all transported goods. According to the latest market report from CLEAR International, Western Europe's trailer recovery has been derailed by the Trump administration's tariff offensives, cutting expected growth for 2025 by 50%.

According to Gary Beecroft, director of CLEAR International, a UK-based trailer market forecasting service: "The outlook for the West European trailer market in 2025 has been knocked back by the tariff wars instigated by the US and its trading partners. This has reduced business confidence in companies that purchase transport assets such as trailers."

Beecroft notes that a strong rebound had looked likely at the start of the year. "After two years of falling trailer sales, a substantial rebound in demand was a reasonable expectation. All that was needed was a stable economic environment." That stability vanished almost overnight.

In April, the European Central Bank (ECB) cut its refinancing rate to 2.4% and other national banks followed suit. Coupled with more optimistic GDP projections, trailer registrations were forecast to surge by over 10%, says Beecroft. Then the US introduced sweeping tariffs, sparking retaliation from trade partners while injecting instant uncertainty into transport investment cycles.

"It cannot be emphasised enough," states Beecroft, "that one of the main issues preventing companies investing in new trailers was a lack of business confidence."

With the tariff war now underway, trailer growth is expected to reach just 6% this year, he adds, despite a generally positive economic backdrop. Only Austria and Switzerland are at risk of registering outright (GDP) decline, with Germany also underperforming in H1.

### Cautious optimism

After bouncing back from COVID in 2021 and 2022, production volumes were slammed into reverse again in 2023 and 2024. One structural blow was the collapse of the Russian export market, previously a key outlet for West European trailer builders, says Beecroft.

"Most of the trucks now sold in Russia are thought to be supplied

from China," he observes. "China also has huge capacity for the manufacture of trailers and can easily supply demand previously met from European sources. This particularly affects large trailer exporters in Germany and elsewhere in the West European region."

There is cautious optimism however, Beecroft says. Road freight activity, which fell 4% in 2023, stabilised in 2024 and may rise again this year. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Composite Leading Indicators (CLIs) also suggest that the UK, Italy, Germany, France and Spain are hovering just above the trend baseline, hinting at modest growth in the next six months.

Beecroft is forthright: "The commencement of any increase in trailer demand has now definitely been postponed until the second half of the current year."

The full recovery is now expected by 2027, reaching levels close to 2022, and by 2028, demand could once again match the market highs of 2008 and 2018, Beecroft concludes. □

**Editor's Comment:** For South African tipper operators in particular and indeed all logistics stakeholders, international trailer markets are a weathervane for trade headwinds. Business confidence, cost cycles and global politics are once again proving just how vulnerable road freight remains to events beyond its control.



▲ Trailer demand in Western Europe has taken a sharp downturn in 2025,



In a sector where accountability underpins everything from road maintenance to rail revitalisation, the auditing of government departments like the Department of Transport (DoT) is not a cursory overview - it's a 'bumper-to-bumper' investigation. Importantly, South Africa's road freight industry depends on stable policy, financial integrity and transparent public sector performance. For the first time in 31 years, the DoT has achieved a clean audit and that's not just good news for its employees. It inspires confidence in the systems that underpin everything from transport infrastructure spend to truck operator permits.

According to an official DoT media statement, the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) found no material misstatements in the Department's financial statements for 2024/25, praised the strength of internal controls and noted no issues in the completeness of reported performance indicators.

"This is a step in the right direction towards a fully accountable and clean administration," says Transport Minister Barbara Creecy. Her Deputy, Mkhuleko Hlengwa, echoes the sentiment.

Minister Creecy says the result stems from a coordinated effort across internal audit, risk management, oversight structures

# DoT's clean audit sends the right signal



**The DoT's commitment to clean governance and accountability was listed as a key factor.**

Barbara Creecy  
Minister of Transport

and executive leadership.

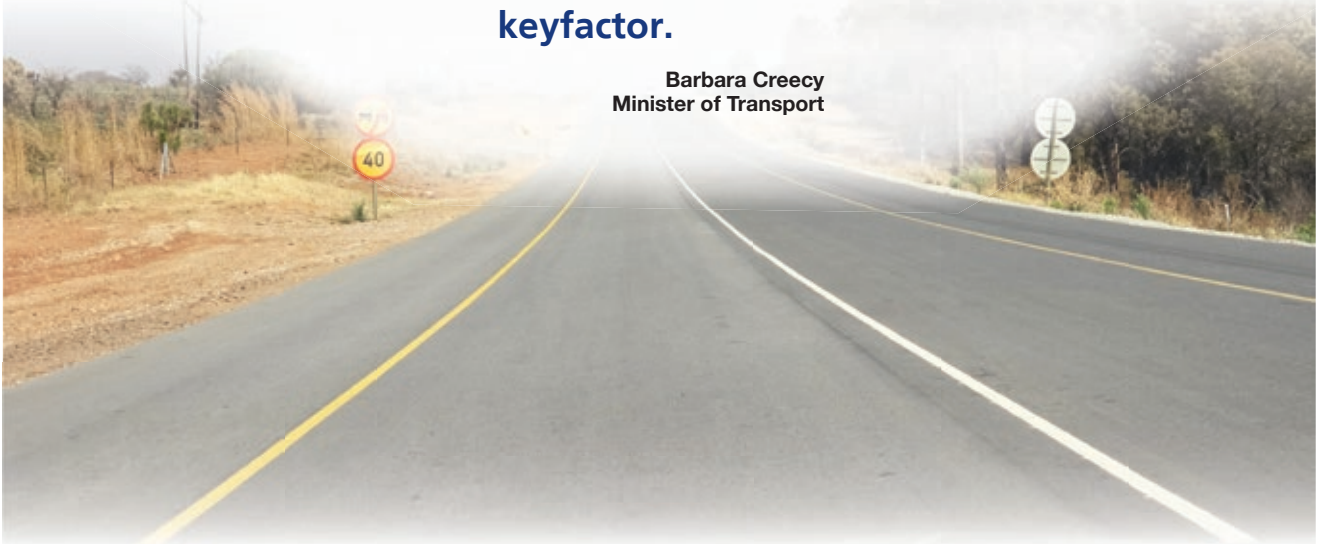
Management was credited with acting on audit recommendations promptly and engaging the AGSA proactively.

"The department's commitment to clean governance and accountability" was listed as a key factor.

Also acknowledged was the role of the Transport Portfolio Committee in ensuring accountability to Parliament - a reminder that clean governance doesn't happen in silos.

This audit outcome won't fix potholes or rebuild Transnet but it does suggest the DoT is finally getting its own house in order - and that matters, especially to those who move goods and people across this country every day. □

**Editor's Comment:** *FleetWatch* extends congratulations to Minister Creecy, Deputy Minister Hlengwa and the entire team at the DoT on this landmark clean audit. Achieving this level of financial and operational accountability - after more than three decades - is no small feat in a complex and politically charged environment. It suggests that discipline, leadership and a genuine commitment to good governance are effectively lubricating critical departmental gears. We hope this sets the tone for other departments and SOEs across the transport and logistics value chain. South Africa needs functional, transparent institutions now more than ever, and this result shows it can be done. Well done, Minister. Keep going!



**F**ollowing the National DoT's recent landmark 'clean audit' (see page 00), the Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport has also just attained a clean audit opinion for the 2024/25 financial year, a first for the province.

The clean bill of management health proves that departmental resources are being managed efficiently and every rand spent on roads and transport projects is accounted for - a positive shift that road freight operators in the province will undoubtedly welcome.

According to MEC Kedibone Diale-Tlabela the achievement is "an historic moment for us as a department. It hasn't been an easy journey and credit must go to the collective efforts of management, officials and stakeholders." She said the clean audit reflects the Department's "unwavering determination and dedication and sets a benchmark for transparent and accountable governance."

For the trucking industry, the implications are positive. Well-managed budgets and strong internal controls ensure that road maintenance projects are delivered on time, congestion points are addressed and freight corridors remain safe and predictable.

#### **Tightening internal controls**

As Diale-Tlabela explains: "This achievement proves that clean governance and strong financial



## Another clean audit!

management translate into better service delivery. We are not just managing and building roads and transport networks, we are enhancing public trust. This clean audit belongs to the people of Gauteng and demonstrates that every rand is accounted for, managed responsibly and used for intended purpose."

The Department's recent focus on tightening internal controls and prioritising consequence management is now paying dividends. "This clean audit demonstrates

◀ "We are not just managing and building roads and transport networks, we are enhancing public trust." - MEC Kedibone Diale-Tlabela, Gauteng Department of Roads and Transport.

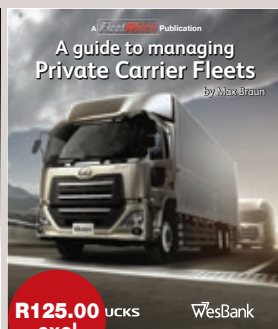
those efforts are yielding results and the Department is firmly on course to deliver on its mandate - a modern, reliable and safe transport system for people of Gauteng," she concludes.

For freight operators, these governance gains are more than administrative benchmarks. They underpin road reliability, reduce project delays and strengthen Gauteng's position as South Africa's industrial and logistics hub, ensuring that trucks, cargo and commerce continue to move efficiently and safely. □

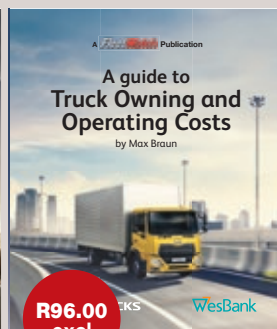
**Editor's Comment:** *FleetWatch* applauds these efforts and hopes that clean governance becomes the new normal, supporting not just trucks and cargo, but the economy and communities that depend on efficient, well-maintained transport networks. Well done to all at the GDRT! Now can all Government Departments - national, provincial and municipal - follow the examples of the DoT and the GDRT. Corruption and mismanagement have caused huge damage to South Africa over the years. Clean audits will certainly help regain the trust of the public.



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# IZI Group acquires G4S

## Redefining cash-in-transport operations

**I**n a country where military-level armed cash-in-transit heists continue to hit the headlines, the personnel behind the wheel of cash-in-transit trucks are not just drivers - they are the backbone of the economy's physical currency flow. The integrity of armoured trucks, on-going training and tactical on-road safety, along with systems that support cash-in-transit drivers are mission critical. In essence, every strategic move in this space matters. The IZI Group's recent acquisition of G4S Cash Solutions SA aims to redefine secure cash-in-transit operations.

The group recently announced the G4S acquisition following regulatory approvals. "This is a pivotal moment for the South African cash industry," says Albert Erasmus, Group CEO of IZI. "As a proud local operator, we



▲ IZI Group operates across financial services, logistics and technology, with growing involvement in the secure cash sector through IZI Africa.



### A pivotal moment for the South African cash transit industry.

**Albert Erasmus**  
Group CEO, IZI

are committed to building sustainable, inclusive value for all stakeholders - our customers, employees and the broader economy."

The deal combines two heavyweights in the secure cash space, promising an expanded national footprint, deeper financial technology integration and a broader basket of secure, cost-effective

services. According to the company, operations across all regions remain uninterrupted, with an emphasis on "stability and long-term growth".

### More strength, greater trust

IZI Group operates across financial services, logistics and technology, with growing involvement in the secure cash sector through IZI Africa. As a South African-owned investment company, the group's approach focuses on developing infrastructure, skills and local knowledge, positioning itself as a long-term player in a rapidly changing payment environment.

The company says the transition has been designed to ensure continuity for staff, suppliers and clients alike. "This transaction strengthens our ability to deliver trusted cash management services and to support the critical role that cash continues to play in South Africa's payment ecosystem," Erasmus adds.

As an SA-owned player with global ambition, IZI says it remains committed to job preservation, skills development and inclusive growth - a pledge worth tracking in a sector that not only moves money but protects lives.

*FleetWatch* will be watching how this merger translates on the road - in improving driver, public and load safety, new security technology deployment and enhanced route security. After all, in the cash-in-transit business, while what's in the back of the truck matters, who's in the front matters more. □



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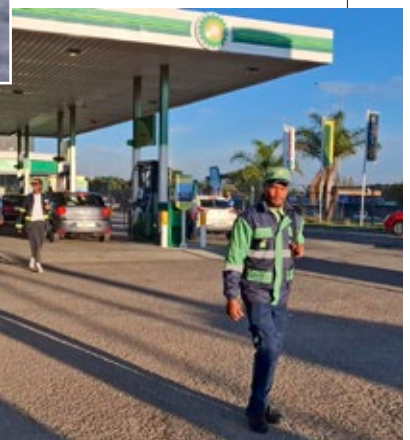
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◀ Unsung heroes on the march: bpSA has awarded bursaries to 32 frontline 'service champions' to help them build a better future for their families and society.

▼ Impumelelo initiative... bpSA is giving staff the opportunity to thrive.



# Knowledge is power ... bpSA invests in staff

**T**rucking doesn't just run on fuel - it runs on people. In South Africa's service stations, frontline pump jockeys are the unsung enablers of the road freight industry, keeping drivers moving and supply chains flowing. Corporate investment in upskilling 'entry-level' personnel has proven to pay dividends across the board and this year, bpSA has awarded 32 bursaries through its Impumelelo Bursary Programme, opening doors to higher education for its forecourt 'service champions' across the country.

According to Taelo Mojapelo, bpSA CEO: "Service champions are at the heart of our operations, the face of our brand. They play a vital role in delivering exceptional service to customers across the country."

By supporting their education, bpSA is not only nurturing a more skilled workforce but also creating a ripple effect that strengthens communities and the transport sector. "We know that for many people, the desire to study is strong, but the cost is simply out of reach. The Impumelelo Bursary is about

giving our people the opportunity to thrive, because when we invest in them, we are investing in the future of South Africa," she adds.

Diversity among the recipients is broad, as is the range of institutions and courses on offer - from IT and business to engineering.

One bursary winner, Mpendulo Tibane, describes the programme as "an incredible opportunity for us to grow, to dream bigger and to empower ourselves through education. I hope every service champion will grab this chance with both hands. Today, I may be filling up your tank, but tomorrow I could be the Head of IT at a multinational company. I'm a breadwinner, a parent and now, thanks to bpSA, my future is full of possibility."

## Smashing the glass ceiling

The programme is part of bpSA's broader strategy of sustainable growth, social investment and community empowerment, following initiatives such as scholarships for students clearing historical debts, the Energy Mobility Education Trust, and training for office staff.

Recognition has followed, with bpSA named Top Empowered Company in Education and Skills Development in 2023.

Mojapelo says: "At bpSA, we see education not just as a pathway to economic development, but as a way to break cycles of limitation for those working hard to support their families. The Impumelelo Bursary Programme is our way of saying, 'Your dreams matter, and we are here to help you achieve them'."

Upskilling frontline staff may seem small in the context of the national transport industry, but it is foundational. Empowered, educated service champions enhance efficiency at the pumps, support truckers and logistics operators, and strengthen the communities that underpin South Africa's freight networks.

"The ripple effect of this opportunity extends far beyond the classroom. When we empower our people with education, we're not just enhancing their lives - we're building more resilient, skilled communities," Mojapelo concludes. □





▲ The team that makes it happen in front of the PinkDrive mobile unit.

► A team effort - Bakwena, PinkDrive and the Limpopo Departments of Health and Education take cancer awareness and screening to adults and children living alongside the NIN4 corridor:



# Collaboration builds cancer awareness



**C**orporate social investment (CSI) in the road freight sector is often dismissed as a nice-to-have, yet time and again we see how it feeds directly back into the efficiency of the trucking industry. Healthy, informed communities are the backbone of a safe and reliable road network - and Bakwena Platinum Corridor Concessionaire has again proved the point by building cancer awareness.

In August, Bakwena, in partnership with PinkDrive and the Limpopo Departments of Health and Education, rolled out its twelfth annual cancer awareness and screening campaign along the NI section of the NIN4 corridor.

The outreach took in six

secondary schools and four clinics, reaching 2 812 women and 2 840 men with vital information and screening. Seventy prostate tests were conducted, with seven referrals made for follow-up care - a clear reminder of the power of early detection.

## Building healthy awareness

This kind of CSI is not charity. It is smart, targeted investment. By equipping communities with healthcare access and knowledge, Bakwena is strengthening the very people who maintain, use and support the road infrastructure that keeps freight moving.

As Bakwena COO Solomon Kganyago puts it: "Bakwena is dedicated to supporting initiatives

which empower communities with vital information to manage their health proactively."

Bakwena's CSI policy spans road safety, health, environment and heritage, and socio-economic development - a mix that speaks directly to the trucking industry's sustainability.

When concessionaires and fleet operators build resilience in communities along their routes, the return comes in smoother operations, fewer breakdowns in the social fabric and safer journeys for all road users.

**FleetWatch** salutes Bakwena and PinkDrive for recognising that efficiency in freight extends way beyond the depots, workshops, offices and highways - it begins with empowered people and healthy communities. □

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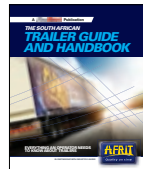
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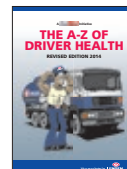
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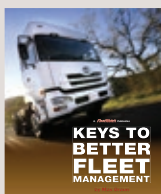
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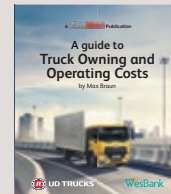
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