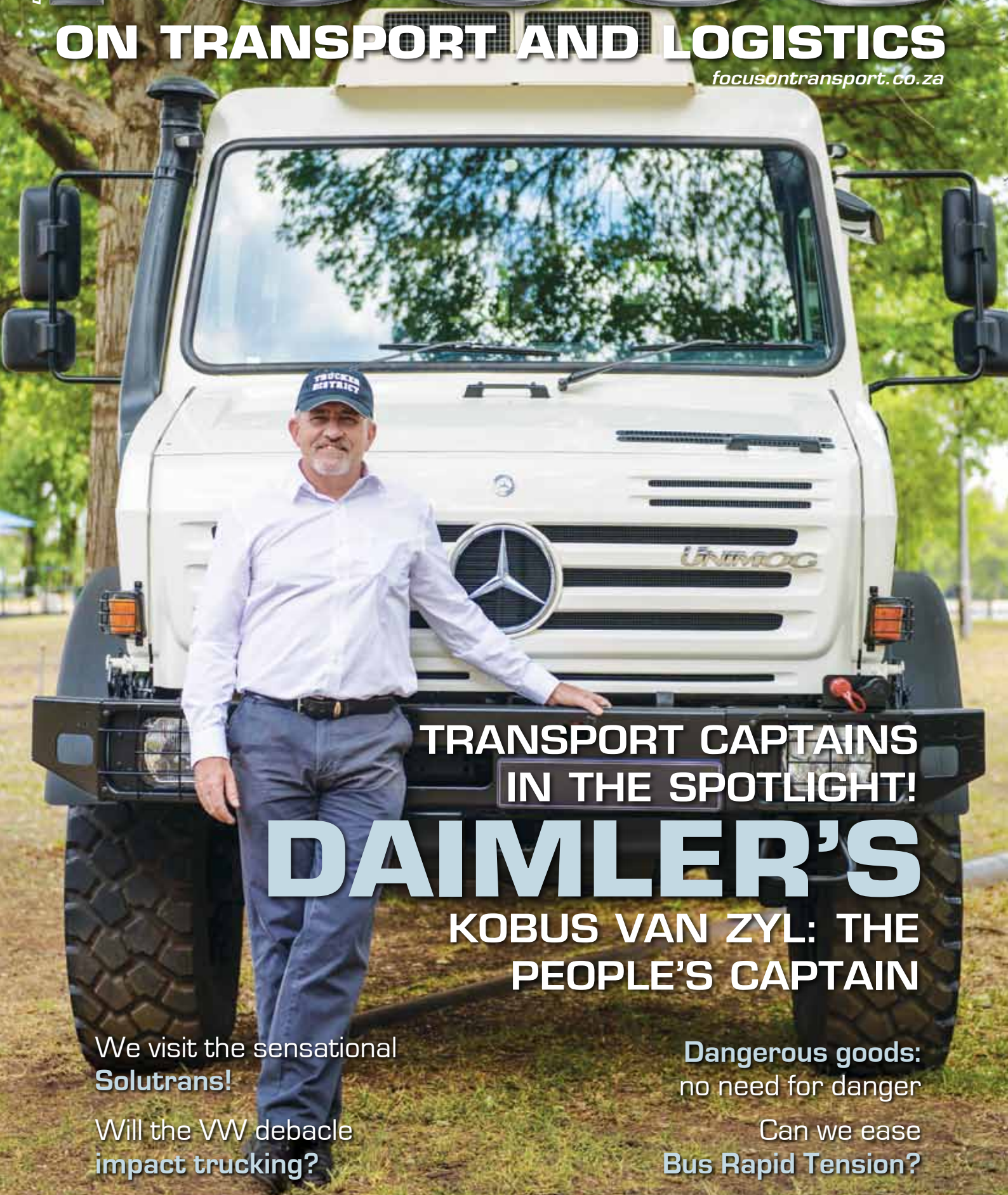


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ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

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TRANSPORT CAPTAINS
IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

DAIMLER'S

KOBUS VAN ZYL: THE
PEOPLE'S CAPTAIN

We visit the sensational
Solutrans!

Will the VW debacle
impact trucking?

Dangerous goods:
no need for danger

Can we ease
Bus Rapid Tension?

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COVER

Daimler Truck & Bus's Kobus van Zyl believes that there's nothing more important than people. On page 12, he fittingly kicks off our 2015 Captains of Industry feature.

FOCUS

ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

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IVECO IS WORLD CHAMPION!

Which is the best truck in the world? All was revealed at Solutrans ...



Charleen Clarke

The setting? The Palais du Commerce, a magnificent building in the Lyon city centre that was inaugurated by Napoléon III and Empress Eugénie on August 25, 1860. It was a setting befitting of a James Bond movie ... the building just oozed with glamour and panache.

The audience? The captains of the commercial vehicle industry from around the world. Plus the full and associate members of the International Truck of the Year (IToY) jury.

The offering? The finest French bubbly, accompanied by suitably delectable French cuisine.

The atmosphere? Elated! Excited! Animated! It was obvious to see that everyone

could not wait for the announcement of the evening: the winner of the highly sought-after IToY award.

The announcement that Iveco's new Eurocargo had been elected International Truck of the Year 2016 was greeted with obvious delight by the Iveco team, and no one had a bigger smile than Pierre Lahutte, Iveco brand president. "We are very proud of this recognition for our New Eurocargo, the truck that the city likes, because it is respectful of people and the environment.

"It is the latest generation of a vehicle that, with half a million sales worldwide, has been holding the leadership in the European medium segment for years. In the last four years, we have won this award in all categories: this is an absolute record," he told the guests in the palais.

This fourth award comes on the back of the "International Truck of the Year 2013" title won by the Stralis, "International Van

of the Year 2015" won by the Daily and "International Coach of the Year 2016" awarded to the Magelys. "It is an important recognition of Iveco's strong focus on technology for sustainability and reduced total cost of ownership," commented Lahutte.

The C&K range from Ford Trucks finished in second place, while the new construction series from Ford Trucks came third.

According to the IToY rules, the annual IToY award is presented to the truck launched in the previous 12 months, which has made the greatest contribution to road transport efficiency based on several main criteria. These include technical innovation, comfort, safety, driveability, fuel economy, environmental footprint and total cost of ownership (TCO).

According to IToY chairman Gianenrico Griffini, the Eurocargo ticks all these boxes. "Iveco has delivered a new medium-duty truck that, once again, raises the bar in a highly



Above: Pierre Lahutte, Iveco brand president (right), receives the coveted trophy from IToY chairman Gianenrico Griffini.

Left: IToY chairman Gianenrico Griffini, **FOCUS** editor Charleen Clarke and the winning truck.



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A scene from a 007 movie? No, but the Palais du Commerce was the venue for the 2016 ITOY awards ceremony.

competitive segment in which Eurocargo has set the market benchmark over the last 25 years," he noted at the gala banquet.

The ITOY jury members praised the advanced features of its driveline, including its SCR-only four- or six-cylinder engines that offer improved driveability and fuel-savings as well as lower emissions.

The Eurocargo is the only Euro-6 medium-range vehicle to meet emissions standards with a single anti-emission system; the Hi-SCR system with passive diesel particulate filter. This unique solution does not change the combustion process, because it works with a fresh-air intake instead of exhaust gas recirculation.

The Iveco Tector 5 and Tector 7 engines are optimised to suit typical operating conditions of urban operations, while the new turbocharger enables the vehicle to respond dynamically on acceleration and start up, resulting in up to eight percent fuel savings.

Building on Iveco's leadership in natural gas, the new Eurocargo is also available in a "super-eco" version that runs on compressed natural gas, offering lower environmental impact and economic advantages compared to diesel versions.

The 157 kW [210 hp] six-litre Tector engine delivers significant benefits in efficiency and emissions. Already complying with the Euro-6 step C emissions standards (required from the end of 2016), this vehicle has access to restricted areas in city centres, providing a further advantage in multi-drop operations. In addition, natural gas Eurocargo vehicles are extremely quiet, which makes them perfect for night-time urban work.

"The Eurocargo is truly the ideal partner in the city: environmentally friendly, quiet, fuel efficient, manoeuvrable and comfortable – an office on wheels – all this, together with the low TCO, makes it the partner for sustainable transport," Lahutte pointed out.

The ITOY award was originally launched in 1977 by Pat Kennett, British journalist and legendary editor of *TRUCK* magazine. Today, the jury members represent leading commercial vehicle magazines throughout Europe.

Moreover, in the last few years, the jury has extended its sphere of influence by appointing "associate members" in the growing truck markets of China, India, South Africa, Australia, Brazil and Japan. Altogether, the combined truck-operator readership of the jury exceeds 950 000. Yours truly represents South Africa on the jury; a huge honour for **FOCUS**.

The Road Haulage Association (RHA) was responsible for collating the votes of all the jury members and certifying the final result. The RHA is a trade association dedicated to the needs of road transport operators in the United Kingdom; representing more than 6 000 member companies, who, together, operate around 100 000 heavy goods vehicles. **IFOCUS**

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By sending us your physical and e-mail address you agree to a) have your e-mail address added to the FOCUS on Transport newsletter mailing lists, b) be entered into the Dream Hotels & Resorts prize draw. The FOCUS on Transport newsletter is sent out every Thursday. The competition ends at 17:00 on Thursday, 28 April 2016. The draw will take place on Friday, 29 April 2016 at which time the winner will be notified by e-mail. The winner agrees to have their details published in the magazine and newsletter of 5 May 2016. The competition prize is sponsored by Dream Hotels & Resorts and is valid between Sunday, 1 May 2016 and Sunday, 30 October 2016. The prize excludes any peak holiday periods, school or public holidays. Accommodation is subject to availability.



SLOW YOUR ROLL

You may think you've read this all before (exactly a year ago, in fact), but do not fret – it's an entirely new story



Gavin Myers

I challenge any of our readers to come forth and say that they have had worse luck during their vehicle-owning history than I have. (To be fair, let's keep it to private vehicles, as I don't own a fleet of company vehicles, which, one could argue, would worsen the chances.)

It's uncanny, but at least once a year something that could be considered catastrophic happens to one of my vehicles. I'm talking theft, major mechanical failures and accidents. Strangely, that once a year has mostly fallen in the final quarter: September may be my birth month, but it sure makes me nervous ...

It was a Thursday morning, and the first three weeks of October had gone well. Nothing had happened to any vehicle owned by me or anyone I know. I crossed over a familiar

intersection as I do every day on my way to work.

I slowed down for a long line of traffic, ensuring there was a good gap between my car and the one in front, when coming to a stop only ten metres or so after the intersection.

I did all this while checking my rear-view mirror that the chap behind was paying attention and coming to a stop with enough space between us. He came in a bit hot, but stopped with an acceptable gap. I could see his number plate, after all, which doesn't happen often.

He made it safely across before the change to orange, so crisis averted ... No ... a sudden screeching of tyres, and a bang behind me. I knew he'd been shunted quite heavily and hoped in vain that he wouldn't be pushed into me. He was. I hoped I wouldn't be pushed into the car in front. I was, albeit very lightly.

The poor woman in front of me (car number four) couldn't believe that she was affected by someone three cars back trying to beat the red light. The culprit was driving a lightweight Nissan 1400, so you can imagine the momentum he must've been carrying ...

You wouldn't guess it from the pictures, but my car's repair bill totalled more than R32 000 and it took a month for it to arrive back in my driveway! All because someone had to try and beat the orange, and was too selfish and impatient to come to a safe stop at a red traffic light.

I need someone to explain this mentality to me. Why do drivers HAVE to make it across the intersection at the last possible moment, even when they know they'll have to stop just a few metres further on, behind a line of cars that isn't going anywhere?



If you pay attention, you will see it every single day. A driver may not have enough time to come to a complete stop as the robot changes to orange, and so goes through. This is perfectly fine, as long as it is safe to do so, the law says.

The problem is that the driver behind him will also deliberately race through, despite having adequate time to come to a stop – and so then will the one behind him. By this time, the lights have long been as red as [insert preferred simile] ...

At best, this behaviour annoys the other driver whose turn it is to cross the intersection, or they would have begun to do so already, and flying bits of glass, metal and plastic will result. Even worse, a pedestrian might have begun crossing the intersection, as their light would now be green, too.

I've seen a pedestrian get hit by a car. It's far more horrifying than having someone bump your car from behind.

Drivers need to come to the realisation that they are in command of at least a tonne of steel (much more in the case of a commercial vehicle), which carries great momentum even at city speeds, and that is potentially a lethal weapon.

And that is bad luck I don't want dictated by others! **! FOCUS**

ONE MAN kann


**ONE MAN
ONE TRUCK
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**MISSION
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The TGX Euro 5 truck, Riaan and Nduna have finished their 13,234 kilometre journey through Africa. They've dealt with the military borders of Mozambique, dangerous cliff descents in Malawi and a stack of nightmarish border crossings. What's more, the new truck overcame every single challenge Africa could throw at it. The team also dropped mosquito nets off along the way as part of a joint initiative with Rollback Malaria.

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NO LONGER A RADICAL SHIFT



Automated Manual Transmissions (AMTs) have proved to be reliable over a period of time

Recently, test driving an Isuzu truck fitted with an AMT, at the Gerotek vehicle testing ground, reinforced my opinion that equipping medium and heavy commercial vehicles with these transmissions is a wise choice for most operations. This is, of course, provided that, during the new-vehicle hand-over process, drivers are properly schooled on how to operate an AMT.

AMTs were introduced and fitted to extra-heavy commercial vehicles many years ago, and have built up an excellent reputation as a reliable type of transmission in this class of vehicle.

However, this type of transmission only became available in South Africa in the medium and heavy commercial vehicle class much later. Many truck operators were not convinced that these new transmissions would be reliable in smaller vehicles. They therefore adopted a wait-and-see attitude towards the purchase of a new vehicle fitted with an AMT.

Well, time has proved that AMTs fitted into the medium and heavy vehicle range of

trucks are highly durable and well-suited for the operating conditions in South Africa.

Many of the medium and heavy trucks that were sold last year were fitted with AMTs, and the trend towards selecting AMTs, instead of standard manual transmissions, is steadily growing. Time has also shown that the maintenance cost on a vehicle fitted with an AMT is lower than on the same vehicle fitted with a manual transmission.

As there is a shortage of good truck and bus drivers, many potential buyers of new commercial vehicles have selected AMTs – especially in the food and beverage distribution industry, where drivers are more focused on the marketing and delivery of the product, compared to long-distance drivers, who are more professional drivers.

AMTs offer many benefits to the operator including:

- Exceptionally smooth gear shifting means that the vehicle is always in the correct gear for the road condition and the load. This maximises vehicle performance and reduces driveline stress and damage, resulting in reduced maintenance costs.

- Quick gear shifting results in the vehicle not losing momentum between gear changes, which, in turn, increases vehicle productivity and lowers fuel consumption.
- The risk of clutch damage is also reduced, as the AMT will always select the correct starting gear.
- Better braking and control of the vehicle is achieved.
- The driver has the option to drive the vehicle in a manual mode and to change gears manually. In the manual gearshift mode the system will still protect the vehicle by prohibiting the driver from selecting a gear that will over-rev the engine or damage the transmission.
- The driver can concentrate fully on the road and traffic conditions. This is a major advantage, as it reduces the risk of being involved in an accident.

Besides long-haul operations, where vehicles are driven by well-trained and experienced drivers, it's my opinion that AMTs are well-suited to most commercial vehicle operations. **/ FOCUS**



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

FOCUS LETTERS

CALLING WEIGHING EXPERTS

Advantia is seeking assistance from people with experience in heavy vehicle enforcement weighing, particularly roadside weighing, using portable scales such as HAENNI and PAT.

We are investigating enforcement weighing practices for load platforms similar to the one in the accompanying photograph. This is a particularly large example; many examples would have only eight or ten lines of wheels.

These vehicles present significant challenges for measurement accuracy, due to the number of wheels and the effect of scale thickness on weight readings when some axles are not at the same level as others.

We would appreciate any links to reference material, or professional opinions that may assist us with our investigations.

Rob Di Cristoforo

MD, Advantia Transport Consulting
Australia



A QUESTION OF WEIGHT

I read with interest your October report on the in-house Volvo road test, entitled the Pursuit of Perfect Consumption. In the fifth paragraph you say that "a full 56 t load" wasn't available and that the trucks were loaded "with 32 t of bricks".

This statement is confusing, as a vehicle cannot be loaded with 56 t of cargo. The vehicle's maximum legal gross combination mass (GCM) in this case would be 56 t. If the trucks' payloads were in fact 32 t, it would then be rather close to the GCM figure of 56 t anyway.

I hope you can provide some clarification.

Frank Beeton

Thanks for the query, Frank. We ran your concerns past Volvo's Phillip Phasha, who confirmed that each vehicle was loaded with 32 t of bricks. To further clarify, the FH440 was loaded to a GCM of 51 600 kg, and the FH480 to 51 520 kg – so, in that sense, not to the full 56 t. - Ed.

UNSCRUPULOUS OPERATORS

I am writing to you in my private capacity.

I am always very interested in your articles relating to road safety. I have worked in the heavy commercial vehicle sector for my entire career, and I firmly believe that there are a lot of operators out there giving our industry a bad name.

The fleet operators that are running professional operations and abiding by the laws

and regulations are losing business to other operators, who just don't care about other road users, their staff, their vehicles or their customer's loads.

It troubles me that undercutting prices at the expense of road safety is ruining our industry.

I wanted to share with you some photos of a load that was being transported down the notorious Field's Hill in KwaZulu-Natal (east

bound) on the morning of Friday, November 6.

Sincerely,

Michael Kirrane

Thanks for getting in touch Michael and for sending the pics. We couldn't agree with you more! - Ed.



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OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE

Two long-standing Truck Test partners, Engen and Ctrack, are once again looking forward to a successful event

Lindsay Bassett, key account manager: transport, commercial fuels at Engen, says he looks forward to the challenges that the new format of Truck Test will present, and to having as many participants in 2016 as possible.

"The expanded Truck Test programme, which will cater for all categories of vehicles, is beneficial to the operators. The more information that can be gathered, on as many different models as possible, will certainly be an advantage to the transporters," he notes.

Eugene van Niekerk, new business development manager, Ctrack Fleet Management SA, says that, from Ctrack's perspective, the new proposed format will allow the company to establish industry-accepted functionality and results.

"These can be used by anyone as a yardstick on their performance. Further, being the first event of this format, it will provide ample opportunities to observe the event from a technology perspective."

Both parties have been involved in the four previous events. "Obviously, the logistics of accommodating an increased number of

participants does mean that the organisation and arrangements will be more challenging," Bassett notes.

Van Niekerk adds: "Having three different routes with various permutations will require focused preparation, but we are confident that this event will deliver the expected outcome."

Both companies are looking forward to introducing some interesting new concepts for the 2016 test. For Engen, this is two-fold, and includes the possibility of enabling this to be a "cashless test", by offering each vehicle an Engen prepaid card that the teams will use to top-up fuel and buy their lunch.

The prospect of Euro-5 vehicles taking part will also be a first. "Engen is awaiting confirmation of participation and is hopeful that entries will include vehicles requiring Air One, our brand of leading AdBlue emission fluid that we launched in 2014. While current demand is still fairly modest, growth is phenomenal as more and more Euro-5 and Euro-6 vehicles find their way onto our roads," says Bassett.

Van Niekerk reassures that the standard of technology and reporting, which Truck Test observers have come to expect from the company, will only get better. "With every

Truck Test event, we provide more innovative ways to view the participants' information. We will also give all parties mobile access to the information, which ensures transparency."

Despite current tough economic conditions, both Bassett and Van Niekerk are steadfast in their respective companies' ongoing support of Truck Test.

"While Engen continues to hold our position as the market-share leader in South Africa, the fuel volumes that we supply are under pressure as the transport sector battles with current conditions," says Bassett.

"It would be easy for Engen to pull back from our involvement in Truck Test, but we believe it is at times like this that we can demonstrate to the transport industry that we are committed to being a major player in this sector for the long term."

"The new format could potentially mean more entrants into the event, but this will not have any impact on Ctrack. We have many years of experience in our industry, and being involved with projects such as Truck Test allows the company to confirm its commitment to its clients and the industry," Van Niekerk concludes. **| FOCUS**

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Driver capability is another big cost area, which our driver training programmes are tailored to help you manage and develop. The same goes for our finance and insurance approach. We believe in understanding the daily needs of your business, rather than just looking at the risk.

Also our new Fleet Management System is the perfect embodiment of our partnership attitude, giving you access to amazing detail on everything from coasting to heavy braking, and then the coaching support you need to help manage not just your fleet, but your entire cost base.

So if you're just buying trucks, we're probably not the supplier for you. But if you believe what you're actually buying is a partnership, a commitment, a total transport solution, then we should talk.

There is a better way.





A PEOPLE'S PERSON

Kobus van Zyl, executive director Daimler Trucks & Buses, believes that investing in people is the best way to sustain growth and make a difference in the lives of stakeholders. GAVIN MYERS finds out how he goes about this

This is a Captain's of Industry profile with a difference. While Van Zyl is, indeed, our cover star, one thing becomes eminently clear the deeper we go into the interview ... he values every bit of interaction he has with other people, bar none.

Whether we talk about business, or life away from the office, people are the common thread throughout our conversation.

Van Zyl begins by enthusiastically introducing me to a special member of his team; "Customer Clive". Clive has a permanent seat at the boardroom table in Van Zyl's office and, despite the pressures of the job, a permanent smile on his face.

"Clive makes sure that we can find a direct link between what we discuss in our meetings and how it affects the customer. When I feel a discussion is not achieving that, I ask Clive what he hears ... It forces us to make sure that if the customer was in the room listening, he would want to deal with us," Van Zyl says.

"The customer hires and fires us," Van Zyl elaborates. "We must put ourselves in Clive's shoes all the time and look at our business

from his perspective.

How can this be achieved – given that South Africa is, according to Van Zyl, the most competitive market in the world for Daimler?

"Our market has evolved over the last 15 years, and all original equipment manufacturers have been forced to lift their game. Competitive products and value offerings are no longer enough.

"We place great emphasis on people development; success in people is the most difficult thing for a competitor to replicate. Human capital is by far the most important aspect of sustaining a successful business," Van Zyl says.

In this regard, Van Zyl believes that boxing people into their comfort zones of technology, PowerPoint presentations and remote communication only leads to repetition ...

"Our organisation must 'make magic'. This means we go into the creative side of the business, allowing people the opportunity to come up with innovative and better ways of doing things. We even create diary opportunities for people to create magic!" he explains.

It's this sort of differentiator that Van Zyl believes creates success. It also forms the basis for his outlook on life in general, and ties in with what he has planned for the future.

"I don't like to use the term 'work/life balance'; that assumes that work is not life. I prefer to talk about 'life balance'. Ten years from now I'd like to be deep into my second career, passing on what I've learnt.

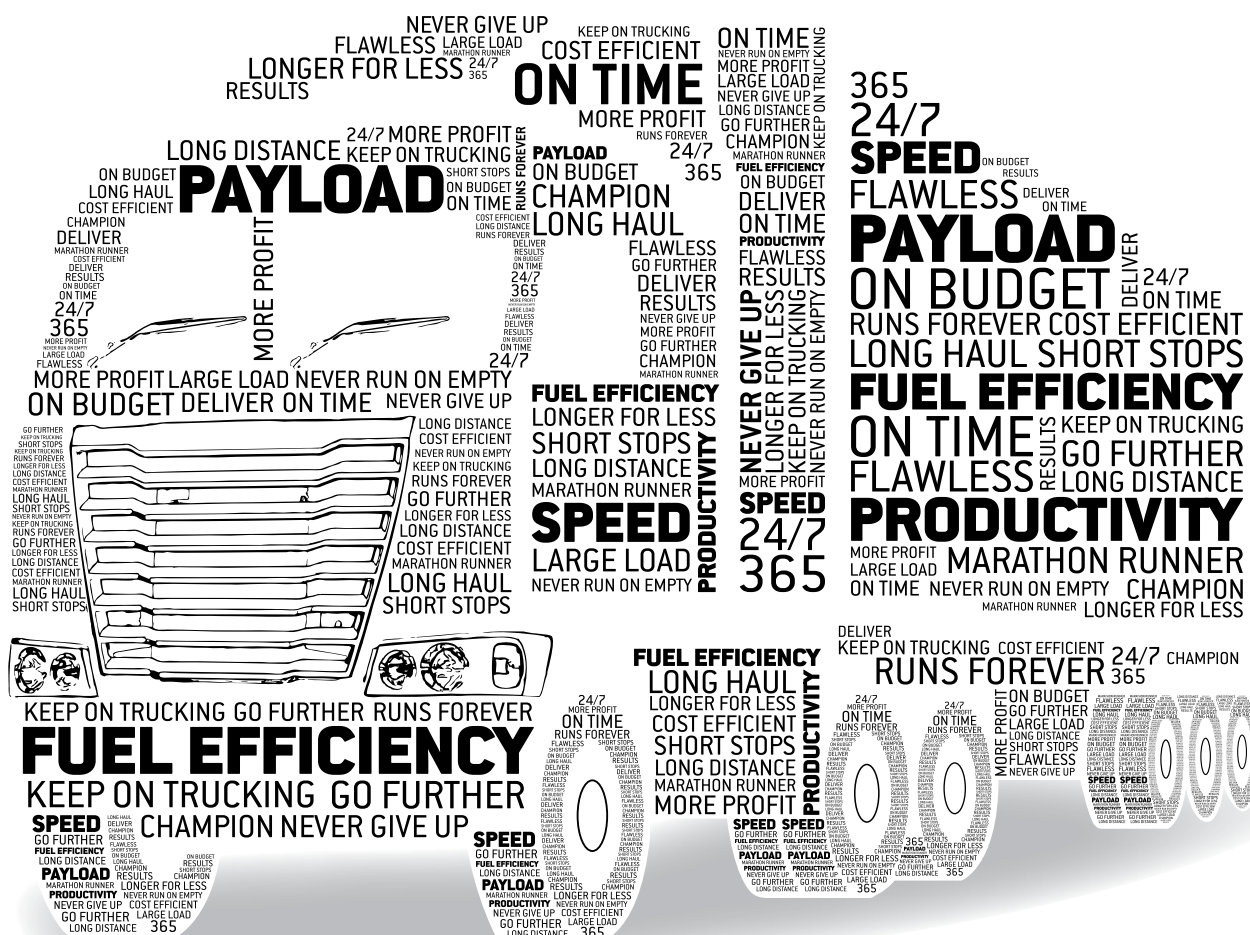
"I want to further my studies and find a way to teach leadership and how to successfully accomplish something, or how to bring a PowerPoint to life," he continues.

"I want to be able to move people towards a value-driven business, where the 'right thing' is done because it's the right thing to do. My future career will definitely be aimed at the human side of business."

A real people's person, you see.

"I never thought that I'd work in such a people-centric business – I'm a trained banker. The people side is the most challenging, but also the most rewarding side of my job. Every minute I spend with a customer, dealer, or anyone, is hugely rewarding," he smiles. **/FOCUS**

The Freightliner Argosy Cummins 500, entered into the Focus Truck Test 2015 has proven itself to be one of the leading long hauling vehicles in South Africa, noted for exceptional performance and efficiency. Visit www.freightliner.co.za for more.



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ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES FOR SUCCESS

The past two years have certainly been eventful for the Volvo Group, as the company successfully launched new products for Volvo Trucks, Renault Trucks and UD Trucks during this period. Torbjörn Christensson, president of Volvo Group Southern Africa, is the man tasked with making sure everything happens according to plan

The Volvo Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of trucks, buses, construction equipment, as well as marine and industrial engines. The Group also provides finance and service solutions, and sells its products in more than 190 markets around the world.

As the president of Volvo Group Southern Africa, Christensson looks after the various brands within the stable in 21 markets in the southern and eastern African region.

Volvo Group SA has a comprehensive dealer network for its various brands across the region, with a growing footprint to serve and support fleet owners where they operate. There are more than 70 dealers that represent UD Trucks, Volvo Trucks, Volvo Bus and Renault Trucks (or a combination of the brands) at sites across southern and eastern Africa.

"All the brands within the Volvo Group are equally important to us. We believe that the respective brands have unique product offerings with specific characteristics and capabilities that appeal to a definite set of customers," says Christensson.

The company is also continuously investing in the enhancement and expansion of its dealer network across the region. "With dealers and branches already present all along the major routes and trade corridors in southern and eastern Africa, fleet owners are able to get complete support from us," says Christensson.

"We are seeing a lot of economic growth potential in the region, and we believe that if you want to increase your market share, your aftermarket service has to be outstanding."

Christensson has a long involvement in the automotive industry and specifically with Volvo for the past fourteen years. He has strong aftermarket focus and was

Volvo's service director for Europe, with a responsibility for the more than 1 100 workshops in the region.

Prior to being appointed to his current position, he was the MD of Volvo Denmark; a market which sells in excess of 1 500 units per year. Christensson has been the president of Volvo Group Southern Africa since April 2012.

The more than 52 000 parts housed in the new RDC include: stock items for Volvo Bus, Volvo Construction Equipment, Volvo Trucks, Volvo Penta, Renault Trucks and UD Trucks.

"The merger of our various capabilities enables us to better support the company's future growth within southern and eastern Africa," explains Christensson. "It is a



The Volvo Group is continually investing in its dealer network which, says Christensson, allows for enhanced support.

"I strongly believe that you have to be service orientated, and, if you get that right, your customers will stick with you through the good and the bad times," Christensson notes.

"Fortunately, I believe that this has been one of our Group's strong points over the years; building relationships with customers and providing them with customised solutions that suit each of their unique requirements."

Volvo Group this year opened its new Regional Distribution Centre (RDC) in Boksburg, Gauteng. This new facility now incorporates the parts warehousing and logistical services for the various Volvo Group brands operating in southern Africa. It was established at an investment of approximately R60 million.

strategic investment in our future and will enable us to support our customers more efficiently, especially in light of the significant volume growth our brands have experienced over the last number of years."

Christensson adds that the real differentiator in a highly competitive market is the people at the Volvo Group. "I am privileged to work with some of the most experienced, skilled and passionate people in the industry. They are truly committed to the success of our customers' businesses and they live our values and commitments every day," he says.

"I simply love working and living on this wonderful continent; the possibilities are endless and are turned into real successes every day," he concludes. **/ FOCUS**

MAN ABOUT CHANGE

Change is inevitable, but creating it needs a hands-on attitude. Employees and customers alike have come to know Steve Wager, MD of Scania South Africa, as such a man. GAVIN MYERS finds out why

Having been at the helm of the organisation for four years now, Wager has guided his team and the company through some significant changes. He doesn't for a moment discount the hard work it's taken to get to this point.

Explaining that the journey of getting closer to Scania's customers began at the end of 2012, Wager notes that the company now works "in a totally cross-functional way, offering transport solutions to our customers".

"We shortened our decision-making processes and improved customer satisfaction by restructuring our organisation and decentralising responsibilities to five regions; each headed by a regional director. Today, we continue to expand the range of services available to our customers, so they can focus on running their businesses, rather than maintaining their vehicle fleets," he says.

At the heart of it all, says Wager, is Scania's commitment to maximising the profitability of its customers. "Take, for example, our most recent offering: an insurance solution, which is truly tailored to each specific application and type of operation. By utilising this solution, each operator can be assured that they have the optimal protection for their assets," he explains.

Wager is convinced that innovations like this are essential in South Africa's rapidly

changing, and increasingly competitive, commercial vehicle market. "This situation is true for us as original equipment manufacturers and for our customers as transport providers. As the pressure on transporters' margins increases, they are focusing more and more on the cost of ownership and vehicle uptime. At Scania, we feel we are experts in supporting both of these demands."

Wager takes the demands of his clients very seriously indeed ... they are essential to the growth of the company. He explains: "Scania will only grow if we are able to continue to offer our customers outstanding customer service. When things do go wrong, resolving the problem quickly and getting the customer's vehicle back on the road are not negotiable.

"Additionally, we must continue to find ways to take away the hassle of running and maintaining a vehicle fleet, by offering flexible and tailored solutions to meet our customers' needs. When a customer has a problem or challenge to overcome, we want him to immediately think: 'Let's ask Scania'."

He assures that there are more model ranges and service innovations on the cards. "Scania will continue to grow in South Africa, becoming more and more a true and recognised solutions provider."

It's clear then that Wager and his team are passionate about the brand and confident

in their ability to live its values and surpass customer demands. Wager humbly explains that the reason for this is three-fold.

"I admire the company's core values: customer first, quality and respect for the individual, which align with my own values.

"Second, the brand is strong and we build bloody sexy trucks and buses," he smiles. "The product is robust and reliable."

"Last, and certainly not least, I love the people with whom I work and interact. We are proud and committed employees at Scania, and one can feel it when meeting with Scania colleagues from anywhere in the world – especially here in South Africa."

Speaking of being anywhere in the world, Wager is always keen to encourage his colleagues to broaden their horizons and think outside the box. "I have always felt that travelling, discovering new places and learning new cultures enables this."

At 54 years old, Wager is excited that he still has time ahead to indulge this passion. "I would like to think I have ten years more to go in my career, and, as much as I love South Africa, I am sure that by then I will be working in another market somewhere in the Scania world," he says.

No doubt Scania South Africa and its customers will rue the day, but such is change. Wager has some reassuring words, though: "Thank you for your commitment. We are with you, all the way." **/ FOCUS**



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THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS

All good things come to an end, they say. For a certain affable stalwart of the South African commercial vehicle industry, though, the end is just the beginning. GAVIN MYERS enjoys one last hurrah with Geoff du Plessis

What's the measure of success? How much money you make, how early you retire, or how many friends you have? Speaking with Du Plessis, it becomes abundantly clear that it is something much more humble than that.

Success, for him, is achieving your goals – whatever they might be. "Success is when

your goals aren't selfish, but add value; that is important. Success is also achieving this through highly motivated teams and enjoying your job while you do it."

A career of more than 30 years allows for a lot of time to set and achieve goals. Du Plessis is confident that, measured accordingly, he has achieved success.

In 2013, when Du Plessis came back

into the MAN Truck & Bus South Africa fold, he set some specific goals. "I wanted to stabilise the business, make sure we had the right team in place and position the business for the future. I'm now happy to say we have the right people, structure and focus.

"It's easy to have grandiose visions and dreams, but having the ability to implement them is where organisations differ,"



Du Plessis asserts. "You can't achieve anything without the right people, and I've always enjoyed building teams that can take the baton forward."

This "people element" is, in fact, one of the things that Du Plessis values most from his time as a part of this dynamic industry. "My greatest achievements include building and developing the people around me.

"I've often joked with my teams that I want to have been in the Seychelles for two weeks before someone notices I'm not around. Then I would know that they are

empowered; that they're doing what needs to be done and are communicating well with each other and the marketplace. I could confidently do that now. The standard of the next generation is phenomenal."

Du Plessis reaped the rewards of this empowerment before. "In terms of achievements, I'm really proud of the teams I developed during my time in Europe, especially considering the language barrier. I visited Germany recently, and it makes me proud to see the number of young graduates I identified that have now moved

up through the ranks and are at the top of their game."

This sort of interaction goes both ways, though, as Du Plessis finds inspiration from those working with him and feeds off their input as well. He has some stout advice for those wishing to enter, or further, their career within the industry: "This industry offers a massive variety of stimulation in that we cater to several different sectors. Newcomers to the industry must learn as much as they can, find out about the needs of the customers, and how to add value when meeting their challenges."

Customers have played a great role in his career. "I remember with great joy delivering trucks to customers. I had the pleasure of interfacing with Bill Lynch of Imperial, for example; I'll never forget his humility, wisdom and calmness," Du Plessis recalls.

"I still enjoy being close to the action. I've made many friends in this industry and established alliances with many different companies. These relationships endure over time; they become friends at a personal level; we are like a big family."

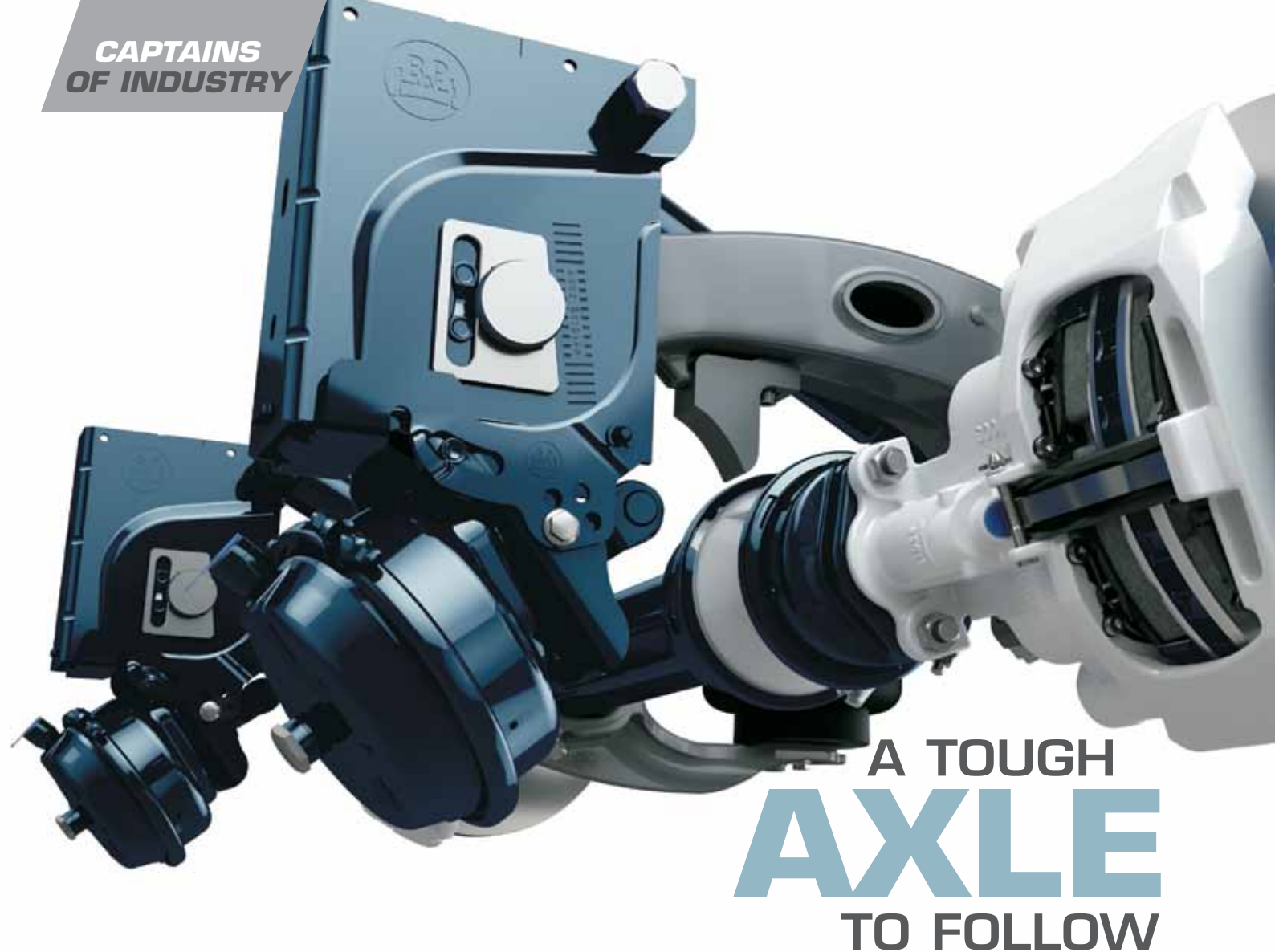
Indeed, family has been a rock for Du Plessis throughout his career. Having just become a grandfather for the first time, he is now especially pleased to be able to spend more time focusing on this important aspect of his life.

"My planning has changed from planning per hour to planning per day," he laughs. "I plan to spend more time with my family and to travel around the country. I've got my list of things I want to do and I hope it'll all give me the stimulation I get from my work."

One of the most stimulating recent experiences for Du Plessis was that of the One MAN kann road show. "It really was wonderful to be part of such a fascinating project. Many people said the timing made it a swansong, but it has been worthy of that.

"I haven't been working to retire at this age ... I've been working, and enjoying it. I'm now able to take a break and enter a new chapter of my life. I look forward to doing a lot of things, and I have a lot of things to do," he smiles.

It seems there are many more goals and much more success on Du Plessis's horizon. **/ FOCUS**



A TOUGH AXLE TO FOLLOW

Andre Cilliers, MD of BPW Axles, tells the company's tale as it continues its 70-year success story

BPW Axles is a wholly owned subsidiary of the German group, BPW Bergische Achsen KG.

After 116 years, the parent company is still a family owned enterprise. It

is managed by a partnership of four, which includes Achim Kotz, who is part of the fifth generation of the original founding family.

The South African subsidiary also boasts some "silver in the hair". Founded

in 1945 as ERN Quality Products, this year marks the 70th anniversary as a company involved in trailer running gear. The German BPW acquired 100 percent of the shares of ERN in 1962, and changed



From left: The same but different ... the BPW premises in Chrisville, Johannesburg, in 1962, the 1980s and today.



hubs and brake drums.

All the customer/application-specific parts, such as spring seats, booster and camshaft brackets, are also welded to axle beams locally.

The responsibility for product design rests in Germany, and all development work takes place in the extensive laboratories of BPW in Wiehl.

South Africa is, however, often used for road testing (together with other countries such as Scandinavia and Russia) to ensure that products are good for all road conditions.

Examples here include the new air suspension (EcoAirCompact), which is intended only for the European market, and also the new Ecoplus3 axle, which will be available locally next year.

Ecoplus3 will replace the current nine-tonne Ecoplus2 axle range for single-wheel applications, while the ten-tonne Ecoplus1 range will be retained for all dual-wheel applications.

BPW is not only about axles ... Since 2013, the parent company repositioned itself as a "mobility partner" to vehicle owners (transporters) and a "system partner" to vehicle builders.

There are several companies in the BPW Group (which today consists of over 50 subsidiaries in more than 20 countries) with

own product brands; such as Hesterberg (Hestal range of superstructure fittings – typical for curtain siders); HBN Teknik, a Danish company specialising in plastic/composite technology; Ermax, also based in Denmark with a variety of lighting systems and harnesses; and idemTelematics, which specialises in telematics systems for trucks and trailers.

In South Africa we support the philosophy of being both a mobility and a system partners, although not with all these brands and products.

Our success in South Africa rests on superior "before sales" support (in the form of strong application engineering capabilities) as well as after-sales support. Here we boast extensive spare parts distribution throughout southern Africa, as well as a first-class, certified maintenance training course for the trailer workshops.

The trailer market was under pressure during 2015, with very low side-tipper production, which carried through to BPW Axles as well. There were other areas, however, such as the spare parts business, which did well.

South Africa's weak currency is another area of concern. Together with continued weak demand, it will make 2016 another tough year.

Tough conditions mean that there is no room for complacency, and we have to do what we do well, or even better! **IFOCUS**

the name to BPW Axles in 1990.

BPW has had many faces over the years, as it expanded to keep up with the growth in market share. Today's factory covers approximately 11 000 m² and includes extensive warehousing facilities, as well as a modern production plant for the fabrication and assembly of trailer running gear.

Although "production" in South Africa essentially means assembly of imported parts, the local concern does have approval from the parent company to produce certain parts from scratch, such as wheel



ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

North Star Alliance's Paul Matthew discusses his involvement in this non-profit organisation that provides quality healthcare along trucking corridors throughout Africa

Matthew is known to the local transport industry through his involvement with the Road Transport Industry Education and Training Board (RTIETB) and Ikaheng HR Services. Since the merger of Ikaheng with the Learning Clinic, he became actively involved with North Star Alliance.

Here, Matthew has concentrated on setting up Roadside Wellness Centres on the African continent. Following a change of focus in 2011, where the continent was split into regions, Matthew became 100-percent focused on the southern region of Africa (South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana and Malawi) and also filled the role of a director for North Star Alliance International.

How did North Star Alliance come about, and how did you get involved?

In the late 1990s, the South African road freight sector saw a decline in truck drivers from an estimated 75 000 to an estimated 35 000. The World Food Programme (WFP) experienced the same effect with the drivers who were assigned to their food relief projects in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Truck

Drivers were dying as a result of communicable diseases such as HIV/Aids, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria.

Drivers were unaware of their role in the spread of these diseases. The delays of goods crossing the borders into neighbouring countries meant drivers were held back at border posts for up to two weeks, which lead to a number of informal bars being established and an increase in sex workers and unprotected sex.

From my involvement with Trucking Against Aids, we became involved with the WFP (United Nations) by setting up our first Roadside Wellness Centre, in Mwanza (Malawi) in 2005, to address the alarming impact of HIV/Aids on mobile workers.

This was made possible through a partnership with TNT Logistics and the WFP. It led to the formalising of North Star Foundation, which later changed its name to North Star Alliance.

What does North Star Alliance offer?

North Star Alliance offers mobile populations, particularly long-distance truck drivers, access to complimentary healthcare at a network of 22 Roadside Wellness Centres across

southern Africa. The services include: primary healthcare services, HIV/Aids counselling and testing, treatment for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as well as screening for TB and malaria.

Many of the centres are also commencing with the rollout of anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment. We use converted shipping containers painted blue. These "blue box" clinics are well recognised along the trucking corridors in which we operate.

What impact has North Star Alliance had?

The clinics are strengthening gaps in healthcare by providing health services that are not available, and by targeting populations who do not have access to healthcare.

North Star Alliance has participated in cross-sector collaboration between the medical and transport industries. Its social impact is the reduction of the HIV/Aids footprint in Africa. By working in collaboration with the ministries of health to strengthen healthcare systems, we are improving the quality of life of key populations across the African continent.

More people now have access to ARVs across the region. During 2014, we provided



329 552 treatment and education services across the entire network of 35 clinics – in both southern and eastern Africa. During the same period, 56 481 clients were tested for HIV and are now aware of their status. With additional clinics coming on line within the next 24 months, the number of clinics will increase to 40 across 12 of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries.

What has been North Star Alliance's greatest success?

As our target populations are mobile, migrant and hard to reach, we often operate in remote areas under harsh conditions. Yet, with the help of our donors and partners, we have managed to build up a proficient network.

The 35 centres across Africa have an electronic data system called COMETS. This captures client information that can be easily retrieved when the client accesses services within the network. It also allows us to track and analyse disease trends.

Tell us about the awards you have received.

In 2012, I was recognised by Ernst & Young as Social Entrepreneur for South Africa and received the award for Outstanding Social Entrepreneur for Africa by The Schwab Foundation at the World Economic Forum. It was a great honour to receive these awards.

This June, at the South African HIV/Aids conference, I was awarded the Dira Sengwe Leadership in HIV/Aids award. This goes to an individual or organisation that has

made an extraordinary contribution in the fight against HIV/Aids through work in human rights, treatment, research and development, or access to care for people living with HIV/Aids – again a great honour that the North Star Alliance impact is being recognised.

Where to from here for North Star Alliance?

We want to increase our footprint by building capacity in key countries. Our main target group remains long-distance truck drivers, and, therefore, our clinics will still be located at truck-driver-related locations; along trucking corridors, and at border posts as well as at truck stops.

Our goal is to increase our Roadside Wellness Centres to 56 across the SADC region by 2023. We also want to have quadrupled our patient reach, from over 100 000 patients last year in southern Africa to over 400 000.

How can people get involved, and what type of support would you need?

We want to continue to strengthen our relationships with our donors, but we also want to build and develop new, sustainable partnership opportunities in South Africa among corporates.

For our clinics to be truly sustainable we are looking into a fee-for-service model. This would help ensure our long-term continued care for our patients and black economic empowerment (BEE) social enterprise development opportunities for corporates. **/ FOCUS**



Paul Matthew (left) has used his wealth of experience to guide North Star Alliance in battling communicable diseases affecting the continent's truck drivers. The organisation's iconic "blue box" clinics (above) feature on the continent's major trucking corridors.

NIGEL WEBB

– PASSION PERSONIFIED

When you hear someone utter the words – “I am not finished yet” – after a 35-year run within a fleet-management career, that’s when you know that you have a stellar person in your midst. THATO TINTE reports

These were the words of founder and former managing director of Imperial Fleet Services, Nigel Webb, who has proved to be a force to be reckoned with in the fleet game.

“I have been in the fleet-management industry since 1980. When I decided to leave corporate life in 2002, I felt that there was a need for experienced fleet-management consultancy services,” explains Webb.

This saw the birth of Latitude Fleet Services in 2003 – an independent fleet-management consultancy active in the public and private sectors. The company focuses on reducing fleet costs and improving efficiency of businesses through a range of service offerings.

Webb is passionate about the industry and this is evidenced in his long list of achievements. Although modest about his successes, Webb has many professional accolades including launching South Africa’s first accident-management company while at Imperial Fleet, known as Collision Management Services.



Nigel Webb has grown Latitude Fleet Services to include the Fleet Solutions online portal.

Since its inception, Latitude Fleet Services has established an “A-grade” customer list. In addition, the company has recently launched Fleet Solutions – an online portal that identifies suppliers of a complete range of fleet management services in one domain. Webb says it is the only one of its kind in the country.

“As a consultant, you need to determine the required fleet management solution and know where to find trustworthy and competent suppliers,” says Webb, adding that

these answers aren’t always easily available. This is where Fleet Solutions features.

Having worked with a wide range of suppliers has allowed Webb to assess their capabilities. These suppliers are now active participants in Fleet Solutions.

Fleet Solutions lists in excess of 20 fleet suppliers, with representation in over 70 service categories.

With people of Webb’s calibre active in the industry, the future of fleet management looks bright. **/ FOCUS**

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PASSIONATE ABOUT PETROLEUM



Mendo Joxo, national operations manager at Engen, has only ever worked in the local petroleum industry. **FOCUS** finds out more about him

Joxo, a chemical engineer with a postgraduate diploma in business administration, studied in the United Kingdom at Loughborough University. He then obtained a postgraduate diploma through the University of Wales, at what was then known as Technikon Natal.

"I started work at Anglo American as a graduate trainee at the colliery in Witbank. Thereafter, I joined the National Petroleum Refiners of South Africa (Natref) in Sasolburg, where I worked as a process engineer for three years.

"I then moved to the South African Petroleum Refineries (Sapref) as a senior product engineer, in a joint venture between BP and Shell in Durban," he recalls. It was

here that Joxo was promoted to the position of plant unit manager.

He then joined Petro SA in Mossel Bay as a shutdown and turnaround manager – looking after maintenance of the plant during a total outage of the plant. "I was there for four years, after which I joined Shell as an area distribution manager for South Africa from 2008 until the end of 2013. In March 2014, I joined Engen," Joxo adds.

Now, he looks after Engen's fleet of vehicles, which comprises roughly 170 trucks and trailers, as well as all third-party contractors that are working for Engen as hauliers or transporters. "I also look after the whole depot network in South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland. I'm often out and about at the 26 depots, as I have to be hands-on."

During an average week, Joxo visits at least one depot. He adds: "Then I have meetings. I am engaged in forecasting and at a strategic level. There are five elements with which I drive the business: safety first; fix and reset; getting the basics right; develop; and finally, nurturing people – we have an academy where we train employees and try to 'sharpen up' their competencies."

Joxo says that, without a doubt, the highlight of his career has been leading an efficiency turnaround at Engen. "When I arrived, the fleet was not being employed optimally. Over the past two years we have achieved just over a 25 percent improvement in efficiency. My goal is to get that figure up a further 15 percent by the end of 2016," he explains.



Among his many responsibilities, Joxo (above) is responsible for Engen's 170 trucks and trailers. One such vehicle (left) refuels the bowsers at Super Park during the 2015 Truck Test.

"The job is full of surprises and you have to look at the small things that could go wrong, so that you can make sure that the culture of excellence is upheld. That is how I approach my job."

In the early stages of his career, Joxo wasn't really so keen on being a manager – he was more interested in the technical aspects of chemical engineering. "In the technical field, you need tenacity, good attention to detail, and a thick skin. The job is full of surprises and you have to look at the small things that could go wrong, so that you can make sure that the culture of excellence is upheld. You need to be vigilant at all times. That is how I approach my job," he elaborates.

However, there's more to the man than just his job. Joxo is also a family man. "I have two sons and a daughter. The eldest works

for Eskom as a mechanical engineer. The middle one is studying computer science and business at Monash University, and the youngest is studying psychology at the University of Cape Town," he says with pride.

Joxo lives in Johannesburg with his wife. "I'm generally a family man on the weekends – I like to spend time with my wife, and I also enjoy sport. Every week I'm away for at least two nights, so I really try to be at home on the weekends."

His cellphone stays on at all times, however, so that, if there is an emergency, he can guide the recovery process. "When

an issue occurs, you need to make sure all the most appropriate help is mobilised, and stay in touch to make sure that everything is handled in accordance with our stringent safety, health, environment and quality (SHEQ) practices.

"Engen plays an integral part in securing the energy needs of South Africa, ensuring the continued supply of fuel to the citizens of the country, whilst never compromising the safety of our employees and the surrounding communities. As a company, Engen is proud of the world-class standards and guidelines that govern our SHEQ practices.

"When there is an incident, it is imperative that correct procedure is followed and that the right people respond. We also need to anticipate and respond to any questions that may arise from the media, and ensure that the corporate department has the most accurate information possible about the incident," he concludes. **| FOCUS**

Through its Responsible Care initiative, CAIA aims to help improve health and environmental performance in the chemical industry and, ultimately, reduce accidents and undesirable events during the transportation and handling of dangerous goods.

Tommie Muller, an independent CAIA-approved auditor, discussed changes made to the Safety and Quality Assessment System (SQAS).

The assessment, which is carried out by an independent assessor approved by CAIA, uniformly evaluates the quality, safety, security and environmental performance of logistics service providers (LSP's) and chemical distributors.

There are four types of SQAS assessments: tank cleaning (wash bays), warehouse, rail, and road transport services.

Once assessed, the company is offered a detailed, factual and objective report, which indicates the areas for improvement. Guidelines are also offered to achieve these improvements.

Each of a company's depots must also be audited and all subcontractors must be SQAS assessed.

Transport companies being audited for the first time need to have statistics and records covering a minimum of three months; while companies requiring re-auditing (two yearly) must ensure this is done within two months after the existing certificate expires.

An electronic database of all approved and registered companies that are "responsible care" verified, is stored by the CAIA. Failing to re-audit before the maximum period lapses will result in the company's name being deleted off the CAIA database.

Fire permits, which were required previously, have been phased out and a dangerous goods certificate is now required. This amendment is indicated in the Fire Brigades Services Act. Changes have also been made to the layout of the tram card.

Evaluations are carried out against each company's own standards, and no company is evaluated against another.

Muller identified three issues of importance, which form part of the new changes: For a status of "approved" to be granted, a minimum

CHANGE HAS COME

Responsible Care – a global chemical industry initiative by the Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA) – recently held a Transportation of Dangerous Goods seminar, at which a range of challenging topics and changes in legislation were discussed. THATO TINTE reports



pass rate of 90 percent overall is required; auditees must obtain a minimum of 95 percent on the mandatory questions; and a time frame of 30 days will be allowed for companies to achieve these grades.

The assessment weightings have also been increased in some questions.

One of the important amendments is that, if companies do not obtain the score of 95 percent on the mandatory questions, a grace period of two months will be given to allow the company to "get things in order".

Muller added that, thereafter, a "re-visit by the auditor, re-assessment and re-submission" will take place.

Once final scores have been obtained and the company has passed its assessment, the auditor will issue a certificate of "Approved

Supplier" and the company name will be listed on the CAIA supplier and registration base.

The name and contact information of the auditor who conducted the audit will also now appear on CAIA's electronic database.

Transport companies that have been SQAS audited and are contracted to Sasol will receive two-yearly audits with a minimum score of 85 percent required. Should a company fail to obtain this minimum score, it will immediately be suspended for a period of three months. These companies should also expect unannounced spot audits twice a year.

Eddie Crane, CEO of EC Logistics discussed the revised South African National Standards (SANS) codes and legal updates.

SANS10231 establishes rules and procedures for the safe operation and

handling of all road vehicles used to transport dangerous goods in accordance with the vehicles' load constraints.

Amended procedures include requirements for the consignor, consignee, operator, driver, and qualified persons – and include en-route procedures and cargo handling. These roles are all clearly defined in the respective SANS.

The National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 and its amendments make reference to dangerous goods in Chapter VIII (8). Regulations, along with SANS standards, are also referenced in the Act and the Chapter.

Crane listed the following Acts and their amendments as being relevant to the transportation of dangerous goods in South Africa: National Road Traffic Act; »

It's important that all entities and individuals earning financial rewards comply fully with the legislation and that only a few categories are exempt from this.



Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA); Fire Brigade Services Act; Explosives Act; Nuclear Energy Act; Customs and Excise Act; National Environmental Management Act; Fire Arms Control Act; National Water Act and the Hazardous Substances Act.

The Act also lists parties affected by Chapter VIII as: manufacturers; operators; consignors; sub operators; warehouse operators; marketing agents; transport brokers; courier companies; wholesalers; vehicle hire companies and commercial farmers among others.

Crane noted that it is important for all entities and individuals earning financial rewards to comply fully with the legislation and that only a few categories are exempt from this.

SANS 10229 identifies various methods of packaging that are suitable for prescribed maximum quantities of dangerous goods that are transported road or rail.

It gives minimum performance requirements for packaging procedures to be followed for testing or certification approval, and provides details on labels and marking to be displayed on the packaging.

In terms of skills and training, the driver of the dangerous-goods vehicle must have a Category D Professional Driving Permit (Pr-DP-D), be over 25 years of age and be able to implement instructions on the transport emergency card.

Annual training of drivers of both light and heavy vehicles must be conducted by accredited and approved training providers.

Drivers of vehicles with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) in excess of 3 500 kg, who convey dangerous goods of Class 1 to Class 9, are required to have the Pr-DP-D. This also applies to packaged and bulk transportation.

New globally harmonised UN packaging markings for all hazardous material are

also available. All over packs are to now be marked with the word "over pack", proper shipping name, UN number and hazard-class decals for each item of dangerous goods contained in the over pack.

Over packs must not contain goods that can interact dangerously in the event of leakage. The total gross weight of the over pack must also not exceed 30 kg. Mixed loads of dangerous goods transported on a vehicle must also be compatible.

A load-constraints calculation has been given to ensure substance compatibility. A warehouse class-compatibility chart is also provided. Vehicle design requirements and cargo containment for vehicles transporting packaged goods have also been highlighted.

This noteworthy and highly insightful presentation for all chemical and transportation industry members is available for reading on the **FOCUS** website. **IFOCUS**

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DISCOVER THE INNER TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS WORLD!

VIVE LA FRANCE! VIVE LA SOLUTRANS!



The timing of the 2015 rendition of Solutrans could not have been worse; doors to the exhibition opened just days after the terrorist attack in Paris. CHARLEEN CLARKE reports that the atmosphere in the exhibition halls was, however, surprisingly upbeat ...

I arrived in Paris just hours after the terrorists' deadly attacks. Not surprisingly, many people avoided travelling to the city. As a result, my Boeing 737 carried the princely sum of 30 travellers. I wondered if Solutrans would actually take place ...

Many exhibitors and visitors wondered too, but the organisers of the event were quick to dispel fears; announcing that the show would, indeed, go on and that additional security measures would be put in place.

It was thus that, along with the rest of the International Truck of the Year (IToY) jury delegation, I arrived at the Eurexpo for day one of the exhibition. I was a tiny little bit anxious, but not nearly as uneasy as my colleagues from elsewhere on the planet (being a South African, I am not unfamiliar with violence).

Also, the presence of heavily armed police officers everywhere was quite reassuring. (As an aside, it was interesting to note that many of the security guards appeared to be of Middle Eastern descent, because the locals refuse to do such a menial job; the French people told me that they felt that this was a bit of a black comedy of sorts ... I'm not sure if this had anything to do with the complete lack

of interest displayed by the guard stationed at our hotel; he did a hopeless job.)

I digress, however. Back to the actual exhibition ... First of all, a little bit of background for those readers who perhaps don't know about Solutrans. It is essentially a transport exhibition (the only one of its type in France), and it brings together about 850 exhibitors from the road and urban transport sector (manufacturers of industrial and commercial vehicles, trailers, bodybuilders, equipment suppliers, tyre companies and component manufacturers).

It takes place every two years and this was the 13th event (in this case, 13 was indeed a bad omen). The organisers were expecting 37 000 visitors (15 percent from outside France). A total of 36 000 arrived (the remaining 1 000 were no doubt scared off by the terrorist attacks), but this was still three percent up on 2013 visitor attendance. Those visitors were privy to a very interesting event, which I will attempt to cover in just five pages.

GREEN DISSENT

As is the case at virtually every transport-related event today, the focus was very much on greening the industry – and ecofriendly »





vehicles were everywhere. This makes commercial sense. Just take electric vehicles, for instance – between January and May 2015, registrations were up 52,5 percent, compared to the same period in 2014, with 35 283 registrations recorded.

There are now between 55 000 and 60 000 electric vehicles on the roads in France, and, by 2020, the country wants 24 percent of its fleet to comprise hybrid and electric vehicles; representing close to 550 000 units (of which 16 percent will be electric). Meanwhile, Germany aims to get one-million electric cars on its roads by 2020.

There is still huge debate as to which green option is best though. Clément Chandon, responsible for EMEA heavy line – gas business development at Iveco, said that it was imperative that the industry moved away from diesel. “Diesel makes sense because it has a very high energy density per volume; it is simple to handle; it can power high-efficiency engines; it’s widely available; and costs are low.

“It is, however, still the fossil fuel with the highest carbon content per energy unit (0,265 kg of CO₂/kWh). European oil dependency is increasing continuously (it was 78 percent in 2003 and 88 percent by 2013). Diesel’s combustion produces particulates NO and NO₂ that affect air quality; its combustion generates noise; its production and transport can lead to major ecological damages (oil spills, for instance); and related taxation tends to rise (emission tax, for instance). As such, we must find alternative solutions.”

Chandon said that natural gas is the only

viable alternative to diesel. “It is available, cost effective and offers a reduction in both noise and air pollutants. We have studied natural gas in great detail and we believe that it offers an annual saving of €5 319 (R79 893) versus a diesel-powered truck.” This study was based on an annual mileage of 120 000 km and a six-year lease.

Erik Ronnefarth, manager marketing and product for Fuso Europe, was punting hybrids and electric vehicles. He explained that Fuso is the hybrid competence centre for Daimler Trucks. “That is because we have over 40 years of experience when it comes to developing alternative drivelines. Fuso started with electrification of vehicles back in 1973 (buses at that stage),” he revealed.

Ronnefarth furthermore stressed that hybrids and full electrics could be cost effective. “We recently undertook a customer test in Portugal involving eight fully electric trucks. Each electric truck saved an average of over €1 000 (R15 018) per 100 000 km compared with a conventional diesel truck.”

Karine Forien, energy efficiency strategy director at Renault Trucks, agreed with Chandon that natural gas was the “most mature alternative technology to diesel”. “Renault is also working on a number of other solutions, however, including electric, hydrogen-powered and biodiesel trucks. We will have a full range of commercial ‘green’ offerings on the market within five years,” she revealed.

Johan Palmqvist, product manager sustainable trucks at Scania, was in agreement with Forien that many options need to be considered. “We don’t believe that

there is one silver bullet; all the technologies are needed to solve the problem. We don’t only want to meet our own sustainability objectives, but also those of our customers.

“We need smarter transport, energy efficiency and alternative fuels. For a fuel to be sustainable it should lower CO₂ and be available in sufficient volume – it’s all about cost. If we cannot provide a decent business case, it’s not going to be an option,” he stressed.

PLANET-PLEASING PRODUCTS

In keeping with the heated debate about alternative fuels, there were many “green” products on display. Thermo King announced that its trailer and self- and vehicle-powered refrigeration units would be available with the next-generation, lower-global-warming-potential (GWP) refrigerant – R-452A – as standard, as of January 1, 2016.

The new Chemours Opteon XP44 (R-452A) refrigerant has about a 50 percent lower GWP value than current refrigerants.

“Thermo King is committed to delivering climate-friendly temperature-control solutions and we’ve been fulfilling our commitment,” said Karin de Bondt, vice president and general manager for truck, trailer and bus at Thermo King in Europe, Middle East and Africa.

“Every new truck and trailer unit will be high performance and feature R-452A and, in addition to new units, our customers can opt for this solution in existing systems from our trained and certified technicians, who form the industry’s most extensive sales and service network,” she added.



In a similar vein, Michelin launched "green" tyres at Solutrans. These new tyres – the new Michelin X Line Energy Front and Michelin X Line Energy D2 – have been approved by Mercedes-Benz for its new Actros truck dedicated to long-distance haulage. They are available on new Mercedes-Benz Actros trucks from January 2016.

Michelin is promising substantial benefits from these new tyres – specifically one litre of diesel for every 100 km travelled (2,66 kg fewer CO₂ emissions over the same distance).

This represents an average saving of

€1 610 (R24 182) in fuel and 3 724 kg in CO₂ emissions over the initial life of the tyres (before any regrooving or retreading).

Cummins also joined the green party at Solutrans, announcing a new stop-start system for its ISB engines. This technology was only previously available as part of diesel-electric hybrid installations.

Claudio Barcena, Cummins regional engine sales leader, explained that the new stop-start system was being launched in line with the planned 2017 product update for Euro-6 OBD C. "It has been developed by Cummins engineers to deliver proven savings

for truck operators with a competitive payback period. We will provide a system that delivers between one and seven percent fuel savings, depending on duty cycle, without significant operator investment needed."

To meet the tough operational needs for a stop-start system, Cummins has redesigned critical engine components and is validating them across four million stop-starts. Hardware updates to the ISB Euro-6 engines include a new starter motor capable of 210 000 start-stop events, a new flywheel and ring gear, new wiring, a new engine speed sensor, an updated fuel »



Top: IToY members were given the chance to drive a spread of truly impressive "green" vehicles from the leading manufacturers.
Above left: IToY jury members pose with Pierre Lahutte, Iveco brand president.

system, new con rod bearings and new crankshaft bearings.

These, as well as the current engines parts, have all been validated during the test-cell and field-test programme covering both truck and bus installations. "An urban delivery truck could stop up to 30 times in an hour, so Cummins's solution will provide both environmental and operator benefits. Our engineers will work closely with original manufacturer (OEM) customers on the integration to ensure the full value of the investment is maximised," added Barcena.

The Euro-6 sixth-generation Volkswagen Transporter was named Van of the Year for the third time, and Dr Scholz Eckhard, head of Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, was, understandably, elated.

"The prestigious International Van of the Year 2016 award for our T-Series is a great mark of recognition for the achievements of our team, which, by implementing the correct measures, has made our icon from Hannover the best Transporter ever.

"We dedicate this prize to all Transporter users and accept it with great pleasure on

of the Year testing process, being judged for its off-road ability, on-road performance and value for money. It was also tested on its ability as a workhorse, which included comparing towing capabilities.

When receiving the award, Philippe Guérin-Boutaud, corporate vice president Nissan light commercial vehicles business unit, said: "This prestigious award celebrates Nissan's 80 years of pick-up expertise. Rigorous testing by International Pick-up of the Year illuminated the tough and innovative character of the all-new Navara."



The ISB engine software has been upgraded to manage the technology and provide flexible architecture, enabling customers to choose what they want from it and tailor it to their operations. Additional improvements seen from the Cummins stop-start system include reduced noise, vibration and emissions around the vehicle routes.

SALUTING EXCELLENCE

Solutrans was also the platform for saluting excellence; the International Truck of the Year was announced (read all about it on pages 2 and 4 of this issue). So, too, were the winners of the International Van of the Year and the International Pick-up Award for 2016.

behalf of the whole Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles team. This great honour makes us very proud and gives us a positive impetus for a good start into what is set to be an eventful year in 2016," he said.

It was interesting to note that Eckhard started his acceptance speech by apologising for the Volkswagen emissions debacle.

The Transporter beat the Fiat Professional Doblo Cargo and Volkswagen Caddy 4 (Euro 6) into second and third spots respectively.

The Nissan Navara won the International Pick-up Award for 2016, beating the Ford Ranger and Mitsubishi Triton into second and third spots recently.

The all-new Nissan NP300 Navara underwent the rigorous International Pick-up

"Nissan is best known by its customers in Europe as the maker of capable 4x4s and breakthrough crossovers. This new Navara represents the fusion of those two realms of excellence to deliver a truly breakthrough pick-up truck that combines rugged 4x4 toughness with the sophistication and efficiency of a Crossover," added Ponz Pandikuthira, director of light commercial vehicles for Nissan Europe.

FUTURE FANTASTIC

So much for present technology; Solutrans was also the setting for a peek into the future, and no one provided a more fascinating insight than Mike Robinson, design director and chief executive officer of ED Design (the

largest independent engineering and design company in Italy).

Essentially, he asked us to take all our preconceived ideas about vehicles and toss them out of the window; if Robinson has his way, the vehicle of the future will look nothing like those that are currently on our roads.

Drivers could become redundant, for instance, and steering wheels will be banned! The company has even developed a windowless, fully electric, racecar called Torq. Oh, did I mention that it doesn't have a driver?

Imagine a world where there are no accidents, no cops and no need for insurance! We can achieve this!" he insisted.

This Utopia will be achieved using a variety of tools:

- Vehicles will be equipped with digital chauffeurs. Feeling hungry and in the mood for a burger? Tell your chauffeur and he will take you to the nearest burger joint.
- "Swarm technology" will be implemented. Fish, bees and birds don't have problems with traffic jams, because they use this technology. Vehicles will, too.

will be autonomous, so you cannot have bike riders weaving in and out of traffic.

It sounds fascinating doesn't it? Robinson predicted that we were about to enter "the greatest transformation in the transport industry since its inception, with changes that will guarantee better quality of life inside their big rigs, above all with zero accidents".

"According to the latest statistics, about 1,2 million people die each year in road accidents, and the number is expected to grow in a society where demand for



(ED also designed an autonomous helicopter back in 2011.)

The Torq is the first in a series of vehicles (including long-haul trucks) that ED Design is working on in an ambitious development project called MAAL (Mobile Automotive Autonomous Laboratory). (No, not MAL!)

MAAL is working on many fascinating concepts that sound a bit like pie in the sky stuff, but, speaking at Solutrans, Robinson insisted that this was not the case. "We can transform science fiction into science.

- Vehicles won't have windows anymore. These will be replaced by screens.
- Vehicles will do so much more. Mobile hotel rooms that collect one from the airport (autonomously of course) are in the pipeline.
- The role of the driver will change. A truck driver will be able to do gym, sleep, or play computer games while his truck is on the move. He will also be able to chat to his family, who will be projected onto a screen inside the truck.
- Motorcycles will have to be hands free, too – because every other vehicle on the road

transportation is still increasing rapidly, especially in the emerging markets.

"We have to change that, and autonomous vehicles are designed to progressively reduce and finally eliminate this problem. The commercial transport field will soon take leadership in this transformation, once infrastructure and legislation catch up to this new reality, and we all must become protagonists in a very near future," Robinson concluded.

It sounds as though the future is going to be a great place to be! **IFOCUS**

As regular readers of **FOCUS** know, this magazine has been appointed an associate member of the International Truck of the Year (IToY)! **FOCUS** is the sole South African and the sole African magazine to have joined this prestigious body. One of the advantages of this association is access to exclusive ITOY events, such as Solutrans.



A FEW CHINKS IN THE ARMOUR?

It is often said that the United Kingdom (UK) has one of the most successful transport systems in the world, but, as it turns out, nobody's perfect. CLAIRE RENCKEN investigates

According to UK website, *The Telegraph*, councils are facing soaring bills as thousands of potholes need repairing. Based on research by LV=Road Rescue, it is reported that authorities spent £1.6 million (about R35 million) in compensation for drivers, who damaged their cars on 12 000 miles of roads in need of repair, in the UK last year.

One in seven motorists said they had damaged their car as a result of driving on bad road surfaces in the past year. The most common problems were damage to tyres, suspension and wheel rims. Research suggests that the figure could have been even higher, as only 53 percent of drivers know that they can claim for pothole damage to their cars.

Over and above councils paying out a small fortune in compensation, they paid out much more in repairs. A £5-million (close on R108-million) chunk of cash was spent on trying to fill in potholes in the

roads between 2014 and 2015.

Among the worst roads for pothole damage were Blackwater Valley Road in Ash Vale, Surrey, and Page Street in Barnet, north London. There were 31 claims involving Blackwater Valley Road alone, and 24 claims from motorists who hit potholes on Page Street.

Despite best efforts, and billions of pounds in road taxes, UK drivers don't seem to notice road surfaces getting smoother. Only six percent said they thought roads had improved over the past 12 months.

Selwyn Fernandes, managing director of LV=Road Rescue, said: "Britain's pothole epidemic is costing councils millions in compensation, but, unfortunately, it doesn't look as though things are improving."

In other London transport news, transport operator, Transport for London (TfL), has been accused of wasting money ahead of the launch of the night-time trains, which were originally due to start on September 12, but now might be eight months late.

£1.5 million (more than R32 million) a month is being paid to hundreds of extra staff recruited for the new Night Tube, despite the fact it will now not start this year. TfL confirmed it has been paying around 500 additional workers, who were recruited for the planned 24-hour weekend service, since September.

Proposals for a 24-hour Friday and Saturday service on the Jubilee, Victoria and most of the Piccadilly, Central and Northern Lines were announced two years ago, but have been beset by problems.

Talks between unions and the London Underground on pay and conditions for the Night Tube have stalled, with little sign of a breakthrough. Unions have already made it clear the new service will not start this year – and there is growing speculation that it will not begin before the London mayoral election next May.

The plans suffered a fresh blow when the capital's mayor, Boris Johnson, said in early November that he did not regard the service



Transport for London's Night Tube operation has been beset by problems.

"GHOST STATIONS" PLAN FACES LEGAL CHALLENGE

A company director is poised to launch legal action after claiming his idea to open the Tube's "ghost stations" to the public has been "stolen" from him by TfL.

Ajit Chambers, who has spent a lot of his own money on the project over the last six years, plans to challenge TfL over its handling of a potentially lucrative contract to turn disused stations into tourist attractions, bars and restaurants.

Ghost stations are scattered across the London Underground network – some in the most expensive parts of the capital, such as Mayfair – and have been frozen in time since being closed to the travelling public.

Many have buildings above ground – often with characteristic burgundy-glazed tiled frontages from the early 1900s – while others have only underground structures.

In May this year, the scheme was finally opened to tender by TfL, which published a glossy brochure advertising Down Street station as "an

extraordinary world of unexplored and untapped potential, right beneath the surface of the most diverse, vibrant and exciting city in the world".

It added: "For the first time in 90 years, Down Street station is considering new tenants for a prospective new lease on life."

Chambers's venture, The Old London Underground Company, submitted a bid in June but he heard three months later that he had been ruled out of the bidding. TfL later invited the businessman back to address his concerns, but he has now decided not to take part.

"I strongly believe TfL's procurement process is seriously flawed. We've been led down the garden path. They've tried to discard us. I now believe we're never going to win this and I don't want to be part of a process that may be unlawful," commented Chambers.

"This is a project I've been working on for so long, and TfL's plans draw so heavily on my ideas, I really feel like this has been improperly handled," he added.

as "absolutely critical".

TfL said it remains "operationally ready" to deliver the Night Tube and the extra staff are working across the Tube network in the meantime. Of the 500 extra employees, 137 are train drivers who are "supporting training and familiarisation in the Night Tube lines".

TfL said 307 employees are in part-time station positions and the rest work in engineering or service control, adding that some of these staff will be used to replace those that leave or retire.

The revelation about the new staff members comes amid a London Underground voluntary redundancy programme that will see more than 830 roles cut as part of a scheme to close ticket offices.

Val Shawcross, Labour's transport spokesman on the London Assembly, told the *Financial Times*: "It's a huge amount of money that must be blowing their financial plans. They've obviously pressed the button too soon in terms of putting them on the payroll."

It also comes after a summer of London transport chaos – including two 24-hour strikes calling for better pay and conditions ahead of the all-night Tube service, amid a series of rows between Underground management and unions.

Unions are seeking a limit on the number of shifts drivers and other staff will have to work, as well as negotiate a pay rise, before reaching an agreement. **IFOCUS**

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE



The secret to astonishing your guests is to keep them guessing – which is exactly what Daimler Trucks & Buses (DT&B) did when it recently proved what it calls “The Power of Impossibilities”. GAVIN MYERS joined in

What do a police escort, a cruise along the Vaal River, a helicopter flight in a Vietnam-war Bell Huey helicopter, and an audio-visual extravaganza at Joburg’s FNB Stadium, have in common?

Well, as DT&B – a division of Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) – was keen to prove, they all add up to “The Most Amazing Show on Earth” ... which aptly demonstrated that nothing is impossible.

Of course, it wasn’t all fun and games – you can’t prove the power of possibilities without some solid hard work!

“Our vision is to be the first-choice business for commercial vehicle solutions and to make a real difference in the lives of our stakeholders,” illustrates Kobus Van Zyl, executive director Daimler Trucks & Buses.

“We will achieve this by focusing on having the best people, being operationally excellent, ensuring sales growth, being customer centric, remaining product leaders that cover South Africa’s whole commercial vehicle landscape, and communicating effectively.”

Naturally, each piece of the DT&B puzzle has a significant role to play in bringing this picture to life.

MERCEDES-BENZ TRUCKS AND BUSES

The highlight event for Mercedes-Benz trucks was the official handing over of the one-millionth Actros to be produced, to Imperial Logistics. The Actros continues to offer innovative solutions such as: flexible service intervals through Telligent Maintenance; reduced service costs; decreased fuel consumption; increased up-time; and high-tech safety solutions, such as Active Brake Assist II.

“Buses are a unique business,” Van Zyl continues. “The customer base is most unique in terms of knowledge and demand. Through excellent support from all areas of our company, we have a bus business that caters to every need in South Africa.”

Mercedes-Benz Bus & Coach will soon also offer dual-fuel buses, which combine diesel and gas to produce eco-friendly vehicles.

FREIGHTLINER TRUCKS

Believe it or not, Freightliner currently leads all Daimler brands in South Africa for customer satisfaction – having achieved first position in the Heavy Truck Study Customer Service Index for sales and service.

“Freightliner vehicles have been represented in South Africa for 20 years and

have certainly proved themselves during this time,” explains Dirk Meyer, brand manager at Freightliner Trucks.

It’s clear these trucks strike a particular chord with those who operate them. “A Freightliner customer talks more about nuts and bolts and less about costs,” Meyer continues. “Freightliners suit them, because they are easy to fix at the side of the road. Our roadside fix rate is 98 percent. This is especially important for vehicles that are used north of our borders.”

However, there is no denying that the brand has some challenges to overcome. “The rand/dollar exchange rate is currently a challenge – importing an American product is expensive at the moment and pricing it right is difficult,” Meyer points out.

FUSO TRUCKS

Naeem Hassim, head of Fuso Trucks SA, says the brand’s prospects are looking good. To begin with, sales of DT&B’s light- and medium-duty range of trucks are up by 40 percent, since the Duonic two-pedal transmission was introduced last year in response to demand from customers.

“The FE 7, FE 8 and Canter are doing extremely well at the moment, especially those



with the Duonic transmission, which currently account for 40 percent of the sales," says Hassim. "We are developing an automated-manual transmission for the medium-duty FM as well, which will be introduced in the next couple of months."

Of course, you would have read last month that the company has introduced the FA 9, from the Daimler India Commercial Vehicles operation, to offer a payload up to five tonnes.

"The FA 9 is starting to make inroads and I'm quite optimistic that this will be a good seller for us," Hassim adds.

Those worried about the quality of vehicles produced in India needn't be, as Van Zyl points out: "Because Daimler Trucks implements the same processes in all our plants, we can guarantee the FA 9 will be built to the same standard as any of our other brands."

"Our ideal is that of 'the fusion of motion', which relates to us being able to offer a variety that we've never had before," Hassim smiles.

WESTERN STAR TRUCKS

Duncan Prince, manager: specialised heavy trucks, has a deep passion for this purpose-built brand of trucks. "Western Star is a niche market brand that caters to specialised applications. There are only about 300 of these trucks operating in South Africa," he explains.

The brand has proven itself in the heavy-vehicle towing and recovery application, where it dominates. Of course, low beds, road trains and specialised chassis are what Western Star trucks does best.

"We're good at this, because our chassis are adapted for South Africa," Prince says. "Our solution is to build a truck that meets local specification, equip it with what the customer needs, and ship it to South Africa ready to go. You can mount equipment of up to about 25 t on a single three-, four- or five-axle chassis and it will be street legal.

"Our customers like them, because they can get the vehicle they need for their specific application. The vehicles are very rugged and our customers like the American drivetrain. Beyond that, people think it's a very cool-looking truck!" he laughs.

MERCEDES-BENZ VALUE CHAIN

As Van Zyl points out, "product" cannot only refer to the truck the customer buys. "It's far more than that; it's the whole value chain around the vehicle – understanding the customer's business, looking at operating risks, finding ways to share and manage that risk."

FleetBoard, TruckStore, CharterWay and Mercedes-Benz Financial Services (MBFS) are the tools that allow this.

More than 60 percent of all Actros trucks are sold with the FleetBoard telematics system, which is also available on Mercedes-

Benz vans, buses and Fuso vehicles. Among other things, the system incorporates stolen-vehicle recovery and a handheld device for distribution customers.

The Centurion-based TruckStore pre-owned vehicle business has quickly become the best-performing commercial vehicle dealership within MBSA, selling more than 700 trucks a year.

With CharterWay, DT&B takes on the challenge of guaranteeing uptime. "We offer a single point of contact for all aftersales requirements and are able to predetermine future costs of the operation," Van Zyl says.

"Finally, through MBFS customers are offered innovative financial products, which include an unmatched operating lease that has contributed to MBFS reaching the billion rand mark in sales," Van Zyl smiles proudly.

"As DT&B, we always believe that our stakeholders – whether they are customers, government, media, dealer partners, the various charities we support, or suppliers – always have to experience us making magic for them," says Van Zyl.

"This means continuously doing what others believe to be impossible. It's easy to write a contract, but, at the end of the day, we need to deliver on the experience."

This event certainly showed that DT&B has no problem proving the "Power of Impossibilities" and creating an amazing experience. **/FOCUS**



ONE FOR ALL, AND ALL FOR ONE!

The headline is traditionally associated with the heroes of the novel *The Three Musketeers*, written in the 1800s by the French author Alexandre Dumas. It perfectly summarises GEA's Golf Day, however ...

You almost needed Musketeer-like skills to play golf at GEA Southern and Eastern Africa's Golf Day, hosted at the Rondebosch Golf Club on October 29, as the strong wind led some balls astray. The weather didn't dampen the mood, however, as everyone was excited that this year's event was held in the Mother City.

Luckily, the sun did shine and fun was had by all, but the day was about more than braving the breeze and riding around in a golf cart ... This year's proceeds (around R25 000 in total) were donated to The Friends of the Children's Hospital Association. The organisation provides non-medical support to patients, their parents and caregivers at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town.

David Stevens, director of The Friends

of the Children's Hospital Association, explains exactly what this support entails: "Sometimes families stay at the hospital for weeks, months, or even a year or more. We provide them with three meals a day and toiletries, and ensure that they receive social support. We also provide food parcels and assist them with money for transport when they have to return home, and assist them with funeral costs."

Pieter Stemmet, GEA director – head of finance for Southern and Eastern Africa, says: "This event is in aid of the Red Cross Children's Hospital, so, hopefully, through your sponsorship and contributions we can make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate."

Stevens adds: "We want to thank everyone at GEA, and those who attended the Golf Day, for contributing to the work

of the Red Cross and the programmes at the hospital."

GEA also took the opportunity to communicate some new developments within the Group, which is one of the largest suppliers of equipment to the food processing industry and a wide range of other process industries.

"GEA is a global leader in process equipment and technology, providing innovative solutions for smart food processing and for a more efficient use of energy resources," the company notes. In 2014, GEA generated consolidated revenues in excess of €4,5 billion (around R69,4 billion), more than 70 percent of which came from the food sector, which is a long-term growth industry.

"By 2025, there will be eight-billion people on the planet and nearly half of



the world's people already live in cities. By the year 2050, that figure will have increased to two thirds of the population," the company points out.

"How can we feed all these people? What can we do to keep them healthy? How can we supply these cities with sufficient energy while conserving limited

"GEA has been going through quite a few changes in the last couple of months – we basically went through a global alignment to bring all the businesses together. We call this One GEA," explains Stemmet.

The company's different applications include: food processing and packaging portfolios; dairy processing; dairy farming;

for a successful start in life," the global process technology provider points out.

The company adds that approximately one in three instant coffee production lines have been built by GEA, and that roughly every second beer, around one quarter of the world's milk and thirty percent of chicken nuggets are processed with GEA equipment.

GEA's philosophy calls for the production of sustainable energy, and the company is involved in the process line for the production of bioethanol. "This green fuel will get us to our destination in a clean, carbon-neutral way," the company states.

Stemmet adds: "Most of you will know the company for the Thermo King units, or a technician coming to your site to do some service work or component sales. Through our 13 branches in Africa we are definitely much closer to the customer than ever before. We are, however, still expanding and have plans to continue growing into Africa," explains Stemmet. **/FOCUS**

"Most of you will know the company for the Thermo King units. Through our 13 branches in Africa we are definitely much closer to the customer than ever before."

resources? We concern ourselves with these things daily ..."

It is no wonder that, in June 2015, operational sales and service activities were brought together into one organisation. Country organisations now offer the entire range of GEA products and services and are the central point for customer contact.

land-based transport; and various solution for the pharmaceutical, beverages, chemical, marine, leisure and sport, and utilities industries.

"Complying with the highest standards of hygiene, our GEA production lines turn milk into milk powder, which includes essential vitamins and minerals in concentrated form

IT'S TIME FOR AFRICA

The future of Africa's rail industry is looking bright; with a local company receiving international certification, and more focus being placed on the operating efficiencies of our country's railways ...

The South African railway network is the largest in Africa and the tenth largest in the world, with approximately 25 000 km of track – according to the Passenger Rail Association of South Africa (Prasa).

With various initiatives currently being undertaken by the state to ease traffic congestion and address the general state of (or lack of, in many instances) road infrastructure, a possible intervention is to enhance the operating efficiency of the country's railways.

Willem Sprong, technical executive of electrical engineering at GIBB, one of South Africa's leading black-owned engineering and consulting firms, stresses that the country's railway system is an infrastructure requirement that cannot be overlooked.

"The government is aware of the importance of rail transport as a viable long-term alternative to road transport," Sprong points out.

"The railway industry is, however, characterised by major incidents that impact on operators, clients and the environment.

For the rail industry to improve its efficiency, progress and grow, it needs a regulatory framework that will assure the public that the railways are safe, reliable and efficient."

He adds that a drive towards risk-based regulation targets is essential for efficiency gains. "Risk analysis needs to focus on the probability of an event occurring – and its impact if it does occur. Regulators must align their priorities and regulatory activity with the highest possible risk, as well as with the potential for improvement."

He continues: "The risk-based approach



combines checking legal compliance with proactively pushing for management excellence. The one cannot be implemented without the other; the two strategies are complementary to each other."

Local steel processing company, VR Laser Services, is a stellar example of a company that is pushing for management excellence. It has become the first African company to receive an international certification, placing it at the forefront of the continent's rail infrastructure programme.

VR Laser manufactures steel products

for a variety of end-users in the defence, mining, rail and transport sectors. Having just received its EN15085 certification (which regulates the welding management system of manufacturers in the rail industry), it is now able to construct, manufacture and test welded railway locomotives and components to international standards.

The company received its EN15085 certification from the German auditing firm DVS-ZERT. The certification conforms to stringent, global standards. During the audit process, local authorities, such as the

Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW), engaged with the auditors to ensure rigorous international testing standards were applied.

VR Laser's CEO, Pieter van der Merwe, says the issuing of EN15085 makes the company globally competitive.

"The certification is significant in that it allows VR Laser to fabricate components for the railway industry to European standards. Besides being utilised by European designers, these standards are also utilised by the Chinese. Within Europe it is a legal requirement to manufacture according to the code."

He adds that VR Laser's certification means that Transnet and Prasa can now use a local manufacturer – armed with the necessary skills and qualifications – instead of importing railway parts and components.

"It is a major boost for local manufacturing, as we are able to offer a local world-class alternative to off-shore companies. VR Laser is the only EN15085-CL2-certified company that can now legally supply various fabricated components for both Transnet and Prasa projects." [A CL2 company refers to one that is able to provide higher-grade stress testing of components.]

The CEO for certification at the SAIW, Herman Potgieter, says: "VR Laser's EN15085 certification is an important achievement that cannot be underestimated.

He confirms that VR Laser is the only South African firm of its size that has the necessary skills set and manufacturing expertise to acquire EN15085. "It will save us money in the long run, as there will be no import costs and currency exchange issues."

Van der Merwe adds: "Manufacturing and localisation are key aspects of government's National Development Plan (NDP). Its infrastructure programme is aligned with the upliftment and growth of the local manufacturing sector. Thus, for a company like ours to now be able to compete with our international competitors falls in line with the intentions of the NDP."

He concludes: "We realised when working with international clients, that South Africa has the skills and know-how to compete with any country in the world. The secret, however, is to work hard and to have faith in local talent in order to unlock our manufacturing potential." **/ FOCUS**



WILL THE VOLKSWAGEN DEBACLE HAVE ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR TRUCKING?

In his monthly review of global news for local truckers, FRANK BEETON details the story of Volkswagen's "defeat device" thus far, and asks if there will be any implications for the company's truck operations; reports on a somewhat surprising new trucking alliance between General Motors and Navistar; looks at two "new-technology" truck operations; and reports on an interesting new Mercedes-Benz truck from Brazil

The one motor industry news story that has dominated international media, since it first broke in September, has been Volkswagen (VW) Aktiengesellschaft's admission to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the United States (US) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that it had deliberately installed software in some of its diesel-engine products that was intended to covertly defeat laboratory emissions testing procedures.

In essence, the "defeat device" was capable of identifying a test situation, and was then able to restrict engine torque and vehicle performance to the benefit of emission levels. Once the vehicle exited the test situation, full power and performance would then be restored. While this would also be to the benefit of fuel consumption, emission levels

would rise to a point well in excess of legislated limits.

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

These revelations had enormous ramifications for the VW Group's top management structure. The first, and most spectacular casualty, was chief executive Martin Winterkorn, who announced his resignation from the position on September 23.

Winterkorn's departure was followed by the suspension of VW's head of brand development, the research and development chiefs at subsidiary brands Audi and Porsche, and VW's top executive in the US. Porsche chief executive Matthias Müller was then named as Winterkorn's successor.

The non-compliance with legislated parameters would also have direct financial implications for VW, with penalties of up to \$US 18 billion (R248,7 billion) expected to be

imposed by the EPA alone. This organisation had issued a notice of violation of the Clean Air Act to the VW Group on September 18. The "defeat device" had also enabled VW to claim green car subsidies and tax exemptions in the US.

The countermeasures subsequently implemented by VW included an internal enquiry, presumably to establish just who had made the decision to use the "defeat device", the recall of 500 000 cars in the US alone for correction, the provision of €6,5 billion (R89,8 billion) to cover potential costs (the company has subsequently said that much more may be needed) and a substantial corporate structural reorganisation.

Volkswagen announced that 11-million vehicles globally had been equipped with the affected two-litre EA 189 engine, including 1,8-million commercial vehicles, which, according to media reports, were T5 Transporters.

With 1.8 million T5 Transporters implicated in the VW emissions scandal, the possibility of heavier commercial vehicles being affected is real.



Although there appears to have been no direct product-related implications for heavier commercial vehicles, the sheer magnitude of the issue and its as-yet-unknown final costs, have prompted observers to speculate on drastic measures that VW may have to take to fulfil the legal and moral obligations flowing from these revelations.

THE TRUCK AND BUS ORGANISATION

Earlier this year, we detailed the formation of "VW Truck and Bus GmbH" as the holding division for the group's commercial vehicle brands, which include MAN; its subsidiary operations in Brazil and India; its joint venture with China National Heavy Duty Truck Corporation (CNHTC); and Scania.

The question has been asked whether VW would consider scaling down the 12-brand empire that it has accumulated in recent years in pursuance of its quest to the global Number One motor manufacturer.

Names like Bugatti, Lamborghini and Ducati have come under this particular spotlight, as they are not considered core to VW in terms of enhancing the bottom line. There have also been questions around Skoda and Seat, which are perceived to occupy some common ground in the European market for value cars.

However, the Truck and Bus operation does present problems and opportunities. The

finalisation of the group structure is far too recent to have yet fully achieved any meaningful rationalisation benefits.

Scania and MAN have an adversarial history, and working together is a new experience for them, with pains having been taken not to soften the edges of their individual status as premium truck builders.

This grouping has massive potential, but much work remains to be done in reducing market coverage overlap in both geographic and product-related terms. Should the parent company find itself compromised financially, there is a danger that sufficient funds may not be available to optimise the Truck & Bus structure. This situation will demand close scrutiny by commentators and observers going forward.

NAVISTAR AND GENERAL MOTORS TEAM UP

In August we reported on the re-establishment of North American trucking cooperation between General Motors and Isuzu Motors Limited. The latest agreement will see vehicles based on Isuzu's N-Series "low cab forward" light trucks appear in Chevrolet-branded guise in 2016.

This new venture revives an earlier arrangement that was terminated in 2009, and promises to substantially boost the volume



Navistar International's PayStar will be redesignated HX Series in 2016.

of Isuzu-sourced trucks being sold in the hugely important North American market.

The major points of departure, between the new arrangement and its predecessor, are that the trucks will be assembled by Spartan Motors in Charlotte, Michigan, and not in the General Motors plants, and that GM will not be adding its own conventional cab (bonneted) medium truck products into the mix.

FILLING AN IMPORTANT GAP

This latter point is an important difference in a market that is still largely wedded to the conventional cab configuration, and, if not addressed, would place a limit on the total number of vehicles that could be sold. It is understandable, therefore, that GM would seek a way to address this shortfall, so the subsequent announcement, at the end of September, that the giant manufacturer had engaged with Navistar International Corporation in a cooperative venture was logical, if not somewhat surprising.

This long-term agreement covers the development and assembly of conventional cab Class 4/5 commercial vehicles (roughly 6,4 to 8,9 t gross vehicle mass (GVM) ratings) which will, like the Isuzu trucks, be sold with Chevrolet branding. However, these units will only enter the market in 2018, some two years after the forward-control (cab-over) Isuzu-based Chevrolets.

The joint-venture vehicles will be built by Navistar at its Springfield, Ohio, facility, which is to gain an investment of \$US 12 million (R165,8 million) and 300 additional jobs as a result of this arrangement. According to the announcement, Navistar will provide rolling chassis expertise, while GM will contribute commercial components and engines.

There is no detail available yet on powertrain options, but we would assume that both petrol and diesel variants will be available in these medium trucks, considering that GM does make both power choices available in its larger pickup models.

NAVISTAR TO REBRAND ITS PRODUCTS

A subsequent news report from Philadelphia also states that Navistar International plans to rebrand its truck line-up, starting in 2016. Names such as TranStar, PayStar, ProStar, WorkStar, TerraStar and DuraStar are to be replaced by an alphanumeric designation system consisting of two letters and three numbers. The numeric code will indicate whether the model has a long or short bonnet, and confirm the positioning of the front axle.



The new Mercedes-Benz Accelo 1316 is a heavier 6x2 addition to this Brazilian cruiserweight distribution range.

The first new model range, designated HX, is to be unveiled in February 2016, and will replace the PayStar. This is to be followed by the LT series, which will replace the current ProStar later in the year.

The joint-venture product to be marketed by General Motors will follow a similar designation pattern, using the prefix CV, and will also feature some unique differentiated styling.

IS GM FOLLOWING FORD'S LEAD?

This question relates, of course, to renewed interest in the truck business. We have devoted considerable space recently to some global indications that Ford is moving progressively back into a business area it largely vacated in the 1980s and 1990s.

GM has also moved out of anything heavier than large pickups since the disposal of its own heavier-truck assets to Volvo in 1996, and the aforementioned disengagement with Isuzu in 2009.

If GM does, indeed, have a renewed interest in trucks, it is following a radically different path to its great American rival, which is bringing much of its truck manufacturing activity back in-house.

It seems that GM has elected to rather play the merchandising role to two well-established stand-alone truck manufacturers, bringing some of its own drivetrain componentry and, more importantly, its vast North American distribution network to the party.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES ENTER THE TRUCKING ARENA

The proposition that new vehicle technologies

fit well with city bus operation makes a great deal of sense, given that those vehicles remain constantly on fixed routes and are never far from refuelling/recharging facilities or technical support.

One obvious outtake of this scenario has been the growing global interest in all-electric buses, using a number of alternative current collection or battery recharging solutions, as this transport mode brings the seemingly utopian combination of zero emissions, almost silent running and smooth operation to the urban environment where it is most appreciated.

It was notable that inner-city operations progressed rather quickly from an initial flirtation with hybrid applications, which still require interventions from noisy and polluting internal combustion engines once the battery power runs out.

PLUG-IN HYBRIDS IN SHANGHAI

Just recently, news of two trucking operations has emerged, in operational environments where the same favourable conditions apply. The Port of Shanghai, in China, has adopted plug-in hybrid electric technology for its dock spotters; these being truck tractors that work exclusively in the harbour area, relocating shipping containers and crates in continuous shift work lasting up to 22-hours a day.

The vehicles are the joint products of local truck manufacturer Shaanxi Automotive, and technology provider Efficient Drivetrains, Inc. of Milpitas, California, and are capable of operating at an all-up mass of 45 t.

Chinese cities are well-known for their



NEW MERCEDES-BENZ TRUCKS FOR BRAZIL

The importance of the Brazilian market, and those of its neighbouring Latin American nations, can be gauged by the fact that global truck and bus manufacturers are quite prepared to develop unique products specifically for manufacture and sale in that region.

The Brazilian market, for commercial vehicles over 3,5 t GVM, is usually worth around 150 000 units per annum, although the current economic woes besetting the world's emerging economies are likely to cap truck sales at around only 75 000 units in 2015.

However, the past and future volume potential of the region has led to the emergence of such unique product ranges as the VW Delivery, Worker, Constellation and Volksbus line-ups; Ford's Brazilian Cargo; Volvo's VM series; and Mercedes-Benz's Accelo and Atron families.

The Atron is particularly intriguing, in that it is a modern successor to generations of semi-forward control Mercedes-Benz trucks that were particularly successful in establishing and consolidating the brand as a leading truck supplier in South Africa during the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

However, the €500-million (R7,55-billion) Brazilian product offensive, which was recently launched by Mercedes-Benz trucks to stimulate sales during difficult economic conditions, is focused on the locally produced full forward-control Accelo, Atego and Axor ranges.

This action is particularly important to Mercedes-Benz as it views Brazil as its major global market for commercial vehicles, with 32 200 of its trucks and 13 600 of its buses having been sold there in 2014.

ACCELO RANGE EXPANDED

The Accelo range is a unique Brazilian cruiserweight line-up of forward-control trucks optimised for urban distribution applications. Until now, it has been made up of the 8 300 kg GVM Accelo 815, and 9 600 kg GVM, Accelo 1016 models. Both of these are powered by the Mercedes-Benz OM924 LA four-cylinder, in-line, turbo-intercooled diesel engine, which develops 115 kW (156 hp).

It drives through an Eaton FSO 4505

five-speed synchromesh transmission, to a Mercedes-Benz HL-2 hypoid single-reduction rear axle. The heavier 1016 model has an additional option in the form of the manufacturers' own MB G 56-6 six-speed synchromesh gearbox.

Late in October, it was announced that this range was being extended to include a three-axle, 6x2 model designated Accelo 1316. Developed from the 1016 model, with the addition of a Suspensys-manufactured liftable third axle, this derivative has a GVM rating of 13 t.

This enables a body and payload capacity of slightly more than 8,5 t, and the 1316 is available with wheelbase dimensions of 3 700 or 4 400 mm for body lengths of up to eight metres.

Claimed competitive benefits for the 1316 include a low platform height for ease of loading, and a tighter turning circle than competitive models. The powertrain specification retains the OM924 engine used in the 1016, rated at 115 kW with 610 Nm of torque, while the MB G-56 six-speed transmission is standard on this model.

The tandem-axle rear bogie has a total imposed load capacity of ten tonnes, and the full-air anti-lock braking system (ABS) works through drum brakes at all six wheel positions.

BRAZILIAN TRUCKS TO GO GLOBAL?

The extensive use of bought-in components is typical of the Brazilian truck manufacturing industry, and it is notable that even Mercedes-Benz, with its global policy of extensively using in-house componentry, has procured some outsourced aggregates for this vehicle.

Brazilian-sourced vehicles – with the notable exception of VW's Constellation and Volksbus models sold in South Africa, and a number of heavy-duty bus chassis sourced in that country by European premium bus manufacturers – have not made a significant impact on the global market outside of South America up to now.

However, with the recent steep fall in the exchange value of the Brazilian real, and the drop in domestic sales volume in Latin American markets, increased movement of Brazilian-sourced vehicles into a broader global market may be a prospect for future consideration. **| FOCUS**

high levels of air pollution, and the deployment of these vehicles will cut out the noise and emissions associated with conventional diesel trucks, which spend much of the time with engines idling. It will also allow their drivers to use electronically powered air-conditioning and heating systems while their engines are shut down.

DRIVERLESS TRUCKS IN SINGAPORE

Meanwhile, in Singapore another new vehicle technology is to be tested in the city-state's ports. We have read much debate recently about autonomous, or driverless vehicles, with the main point of discussion being when, and not if, this technology could be more widely used.

The only sticking points seem to be the potential interaction between autonomous vehicles and those still being driven by people, the interface between driverless vehicles and the less-than-perfect infrastructure that they will depend on for safe operation, as well as the associated safety and liability issues.

Singapore's proposal, once again, involves specialist vehicles moving containers between port terminals, and is based on a concept where one truck, driven by a human, would be "shadowed" by a "platoon" of three or four driverless vehicles. In the controlled environment of Singapore's ports, the authorities will be able to ensure that the operational environment remains pristine.



Global FOCUS is a monthly update of international news relating to the commercial vehicle industry. It is compiled exclusively for FOCUS by Frank Beeton of Econometrix. Do you have a comment or thought you would like to share based on this column? Visit www.focusontransport.co.za and have your say.



POINTER

Global Telematics has joined Pointer Telocation Ltd!

With Global Telematics having almost 20 years of proud experience in the South African fleet telematics market, and Pointer with over 1.5 million commercial vehicles under their belt in over 55 countries, it is peaked to be an exciting 2016.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR POINTER SA (PTY) LTD, WE ARE ON A ROLL!

Pointer – The Smart Way Forward.

SHORT HAULS



ALPINE FOR MAN

MAN Truck & Bus SA has appointed Alpine Truck & Bus as the latest addition to its dealer network. The New Germany-based dealer forms part of the Alpine Group – a KwaZulu-Natal company with 43 years of automotive sales and service excellence.

Bruce Dickson, director of after-sales service at Alpine Truck & Bus, explains that Alpine, as a MAN service partner, has earned a solid reputation in the region for its ability to service both Volkswagen (VW) and MAN vehicles professionally and cost effectively.

"This new facility will allow us to set new benchmarks in the servicing activity we undertake for MAN and VW truck and bus customers. Our focus is on service levels and quality over quantity in order to offer the best possible customer experience."

The new Alpine Truck & Bus facility has been built at an investment of R40 million. It features: nine service bays; a wash bay with pit; a full parts department; state-of-the-art equipment including a high-tech brake roller tester; and a well-appointed driver hospitality area.

"We've implemented MAN service core processes – a quality assurance programme specifically designed for the servicing of MAN and VW vehicles – and have achieved full MAN accreditation on equipment and skills capacity," Dickson continues.

Says Garth La Reservee, Alpine group MD: "Our aim has never been to be number one in sales; it has always been to be number one in service. We've gained a reputation for being a benchmark with VW and Audi, and our aim is to do the same with the truck and bus market. We'd like to thank MAN for giving us the opportunity to move from the purely passenger car market into the trucking arena."

Alpine Truck & Bus will eventually offer universal 24-hour roadside assistance and mobile workshops.

The company is also looking at growth in terms of off-site workshops at customer depots and has announced the establishment of a pilot project with Timber Logistics Services.

KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE

"Stop, Look, Wave" is the message the Volvo Group Southern Africa is aiming at children; to help them understand how to best behave around trucks, buses and cars and, ultimately, to keep them safe on the roads.

"Our research has found that the majority of road accidents are, to some degree, as a result of human behaviour. For this reason, Volvo Group has decided to work on raising children's awareness of how to behave safely in traffic through its Stop, Look, Wave campaign," explains Torbjörn Christensson, president of Volvo Group Southern Africa.

This campaign is based on activities developed by Volvo Trucks and executed since 2001 in several countries. In Denmark, for example, 80 000 school children have been trained on traffic safety with the help of Volvo Trucks.

At the campaign's kick-off event in South Africa, Volvo Group, in partnership with the Star for Life non-profit organisation, educated 768 children about the importance of road safety at Palmridge Primary School in Kathlehong, Johannesburg.

A specially developed training kit facilitated conversation with the children, and the message was brought home through various song



and dance activities. The participating children also received reflective vests to wear to make them more visible when walking or riding bicycles.

Discussion and practical demonstrations included information on the size of trucks and buses, their uses, when and how they operate, as well as the need for road users to be as visible as possible to the truck drivers.

In order to reach as many children as possible, the Stop, Look, Wave campaign will now be rolled out to more of the 17 Star for Life Schools around the country.

Star for Life is a South African non-profit organisation founded by Swedish entrepreneur and philanthropist, Dan Ollsen, in 2005. It provides young people with life-skills training, health education and sport training, instilling attitudes and behaviours that enable young people fulfil their dreams of a better future.

Since its inception, 100 000 students from about 100 schools in South Africa and Namibia have taken part in the Star for Life programme. The Volvo Group's partnership with Star for Life began in 2008.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SALES REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2015

Note: For the time being, Great Wall Motors SA (GWM) and Mercedes-Benz SA (MBSA) will only report aggregated sales data. The GWMSA and MBSA commercial vehicle market split volumes are estimates based on historical trends and forecasting techniques. The totals listed below do not include MBSA figures.

Light Commercial Vehicles < 3 501 kg	Total: 15 171
AMH	659
Fiat Group	19
Ford Motor Company	2 806
GMSA	3 356
GWM	148
Jaguar Land Rover	92
JMC	69
Mahindra	224
Mazda South Africa	77
Mercedes-Benz SA – estimate	17
Mitsubishi Motors SA	12
Nissan	2 808
Peugeot Citroën SA	3
Renault	9
Suzuki Auto	5
TATA	163
Toyota	4 173
Volkswagen SA	531

Medium Commercial Vehicles 3 501 – 8 500 kg	Total: 1 064
AMH	21
Fiat Group	9
Ford Motor Company	28
GMSA	225
Iveco	52
JMC	16
Mercedes-Benz SA – estimate	202
Peugeot Citroën SA	14
TATA	52
Toyota	231
Volkswagen SA	106
Volvo Group Southern Africa	108

Heavy Commercial Vehicles 8 501 – 16 500 kg	Total: 383
FAW	66
GMSA	159
Iveco	1
MAN	5
Powerstar	1
Mercedes-Benz SA – estimate	55
TATA	57
Toyota	94

Extra-Heavy Commercial Vehicles > 16 500 kg	Total: 930
Babcock DAF	21
FAW	24
GMSA	46
Iveco	48
MAN	114
Mercedes-Benz SA – estimate	388
Powerstar	33
Scania	244
TATA	16
Toyota	56
Volvo Group Southern Africa	328

Buses > 8 500 kg	Total: 58
GMSA	3
MAN	25
Mercedes-Benz SA – estimate	20
Scania	24
TATA	5
Volvo Group Southern Africa	1

*Source: National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (Naamsa).

FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR BUSINESS

If you operate a refrigerated fleet then you're probably using today's most common refrigerant, R-404A. To reduce global warming, the phasing-out of Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) gases – including R-404A – began with a new European legislation that took effect in January 2015. HFCs have the potential to be powerful greenhouse gases with long atmospheric lifetimes.

With more than 75 years of experience in refrigeration, Thermo King has researched and developed an alternative to R-404A.

"Our solution is easy and cost-effective to implement. It's a completely new refrigerant called R-452A, which can simply be dropped into an existing system. R-452A is known as a Hydrofluoroolefin (HFO) refrigerant. Best of all, it works and we've proved it," says Francois van der Westhuizen, national sales manager – transport, GEA Refrigeration Africa.

HFOs are fourth-generation refrigerants with lower global-warming potential than HFCs.

There are numerous benefits to using R-452A, chief among which is a reduced environmental impact of up to 45 percent. There will be no loss of performance or reliability of refrigeration units, or any additional costs.

Using the gas also fulfills a pre-emptive compliance with the 2020 F-Gas regulations and carries with it an improved corporate image for the company.

The GEA Refrigeration Africa network has been fully trained and certified in all relevant aspects of the new F-Gas regulations. The company is also able to assist with an expert assessment of the impact of the legislation on a refrigerated transport operation, as well as to actively reduce the environmental impact of a fleet.



CREATING MOMENTUM IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Truck body and trailer manufacturer Serco has reported a sales growth in excess of 20 percent for 2015.

More than 50 new clients in the first six months of this year underscored this growth. "This growth was largely through Serco striving to deliver a high-quality product and tangible solutions," says MD Clinton Holcroft.

Holcroft says the performance of the new, improved Johannesburg branch was impressive, with volumes increasing by more than 50 percent over last year.

Likewise, he expects a similar performance next year from the extended Durban facility. "The facility's new panel manufacturing

equipment will set a new standard for us in terms of panel strength and thermal efficiency of our refrigerated bodies."

"Serco has managed to grow volumes and currently has a healthy order book based on good quality and innovative solutions. These include our lightweight construction, which offers improved payload for transporters. We have also introduced our high-volume step-deck trailers, which are proving popular for cross-border transport and local bread distribution," Holcroft says.

"While we are concerned about the general lack of growth in the South African economy impacting demand in 2016, we

believe the new technology, together with the ongoing improvements in our efficiency, will help us to sustain the momentum we have created," concludes Holcroft.



BEST IN THE WORLD

South Africa's trucking industry is infamous for its harsh operating conditions, but this isn't hampering Marshal Hendricks, from Imperial Fast and Fresh ... This 30-year-old driver is aiming for gold in the FleetBoard Drivers' League.

"It is an annual online competition, which runs for FleetBoard customers throughout the world," explains Rowlands Peters, national sales manager: FleetBoard sales and marketing of Mercedes-Benz Solutions and Telematics.

"Using FleetBoard, we rate a driver and vehicle management system, on a score of one to ten. The higher the number, the better the driver actually drives. Hendricks has an extremely high score averaging 9,96 – he is currently sitting at number one in the world."

More than 20 countries are participating in the FleetBoard Driver's League. "In South Africa we've

got over 160 fleets, with more than 2 500 drivers taking part," Peters points out. "Internationally, there are about 20 000 drivers."

He explains that drivers need to travel at least 4 000 km a month, on average, and have to have, on average, more than 16 t on the vehicle. "You don't want drivers to just drive the truck tractor around and get high driver scores," Peters points out.

The winner will jet off to Germany and get a tour of the factory, but this isn't what's motivating Hendricks: "I try not to focus on the prize. It is more important for me to win it for personal reasons, and I don't want to be distracted."

"You need to know how to utilise the vehicle, and continuous feedback helps," notes Peters. "This is what Fast and Fresh does on a regular basis, using the FleetBoard system."

Good luck Hendricks, we're rooting for you!

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BUTTING HEADS

With the continuing battle for funding and the butting of heads between different approaches to the provision of bus services, we explore the current state of local bus services and ask what can be done to ease the situation

The debate among South African transport professionals and officials concerning the merits of bus rapid transit (BRT) systems continues to rage on. While existing bus services struggle from a lack of funding and government subsidies, local authorities around the country are investing millions of rand in BRT systems.

Adding to the tumultuous situation have been numerous news reports over the past months detailing low passenger numbers and woeful financial situations across both BRT and regional bus services.

On August 11, *Pretoria News* ran an article by independent transport analyst Paul Browning, who wrote about evidence of the potential financial burden of Pretoria's A Re Yeng BRT system being borne by ratepayers. "Residents of Tshwane might be wary of a situation where perhaps ten percent of rates income must be devoted to the public transport system," he said.

On September 6, the *Sunday Independent* reported that "the Forum of Limpopo

Entrepreneurs had asked the Hawks and the public protector to look into alleged irregularities in the awarding of about R81 million in contracts to BRT consultants in Polokwane".

Then, on October 2, *Business Day* reported that "none of Johannesburg's transport corridors has enough passenger demand to justify the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system".

Executive director of transportation for the city, Lisa Seftel, was quoted as saying demand was below international benchmarks for such bus systems – most of Johannesburg's corridors having about 10 000 commuters, who could use Rea Vaya, compared to a minimum of 14 000 passengers in some South American countries.

Finally, on October 13, *The Star* reported that Johannesburg's Metrobus "has lost nine percent of its users over the past year, with a loss of 1,3-million passengers. The city's public transport entity recorded a net loss of R3,8 million in the fourth quarter – increasing its deficit by R5,7 million year-on-

year to R90,8 million – as shown in its most recent quarterly report".

The picture being painted is depressing, and it is clear that solutions need to be found to the funding woes, as well as to solve the overall bad relationships between the various BRT systems and their fellow bus services.

Speaking at the Southern African Bus Operators' Association (SABOA) conference earlier this year, Philip van Ryneveld, from Hunter Van Ryneveld, suggested that the mindset must shift from conventional bus, versus BRT, to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each.

He added that BRT could have positive spin-offs for the conventional bus industry, including direct business opportunities and increased resources and understanding.

"Institutional change is difficult, but a rationalisation of public authority is required in the transport sector," he noted, stating that there needs to be integration of modes, land use and transport; along with a clear focus of accountability.



However, the question of funding lingers; especially regarding Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks (IRPTNs), which require special infrastructure, vehicles and operations.

Three members of public sector consultancy Pegasys Strategy and Development – director Constantin von der Heyden and associate directors Peter Koch and Stephen de Stadler – have produced papers on these topics.

In his paper titled: Opportunities for public private partnerships in IRPTN infrastructure, De Stadler says: "The future budgeted capital funding required to roll out the proposed public transport investments are in excess of the level of grant funding likely to be available from the national fiscus." He notes that third-party funding options need to be actively investigated and developed.

"By a careful analysis of all infrastructure elements, followed by a financial structuring exercise, it may be possible to reduce the current sole reliance on grant funding for infrastructure development," he notes.

One such option is that of public-private partnerships (PPPs).

De Stadler says, however, that the limited number of successful PPPs at municipal level suggests that they are not usually investigated to the fullest extent.

Among his recommendations to alleviate administrative issues and provide a source of additional funding to IRPTNs, De Stadler suggests identifying, at national level, those elements of the IRPTN that could be financed using the PPP methodology and the development by the PPP unit of national treasury of a uniform PPP approach.

He also suggests investigation, at national level, of potential donors or developmental financial institutions that may wish to partner with national and local government in this initiative.

In his paper entitled: IRPTN vehicle financing options and considerations, Koch states that acquisition of a bus fleet presents the second-largest component of capital expenditure by the implementing municipalities.

"A number of the first bus purchases were funded by grant funding, allocated and distributed in terms of the Division of Revenue Act (DORA). However, the grant framework (and the NDOT) has discouraged the use of grant funding for an up-front purchase, and has, instead, committed to repaying the capital, finance and transaction costs over time," he notes.

Koch continues that neither model, in its pure form, has achieved the objectives of procuring financing at the lowest possible cost, or allows for the least complexity of implementation and management, yet also allows for the requisite level of municipal control and empowerment of the affected operators.

He suggests the Municipal Entity (ME) model, which, he says, seeks to combine the benefits of a corporate finance transaction to the municipality, while emphasising the empowerment and alignment benefits of a project finance transaction for the affected operators.

Koch explains: "An ME is a separate for-profit company incorporated in terms of Section 8 (2) of the Companies Act and as defined in the Municipal Systems Act. The municipality is required to hold a controlling interest in the company.

"The affected operators may be incorporated as minority shareholders. The ME enters into the agreement to purchase the buses and then leases the buses to the municipality, which, in turn, leases them to the operating company."

There are numerous benefits to the ME model. "With the buses in the control of the City, the municipality is not beholden to an individual operator, or a third-party owner. The municipality can ensure that vehicles are properly cared for and maintained, reducing the long-term costs to the City.

"The ME further provides for the incorporation of the additional stakeholders, which ensures that the parties have an incentive to protect and manage the assets and work towards successful implementation and operation. This aids empowerment objectives, and allows the municipality to retain ownership of the residual value of the buses, once the initial contract has been concluded."

That addresses the infrastructure and vehicles, but what about the operations? Von der Heyden, in his paper entitled: Financing IRPTN operations: considerations for cities implementing IRPTNs in South Africa, says that initial expectations were that fare income from passengers would cover at least the direct operating costs.

He notes, however: "There can be no single income source (in addition to fare revenue) as the silver-bullet solution." Worryingly, he adds that even after pursuing all of the recommended funding options, it is likely that a fairly significant operational shortfall will remain.

To date, the main sources of funding have been fare revenue (around 20 percent of total operating costs), national grant funding (30 percent), municipal contributions and other sources. Roughly 45 percent of total operating costs are left to be funded by other sources.

These, he says, could be from municipal charges (inclusion in the rates bill), equitable shares, provincial cooperation, local government grants, the fuel levy, advertising and commercial revenue, carbon credits, land value capture, congestion charges, and parking levies.

Von der Heyden summarises: "Implementation of IRPTNs is proving to be a significant financial risk for city treasuries to undertake alone and, even with the additional sources of income, it will be difficult for cities to cover the operational shortfalls.

"Ultimately, this means that South Africa needs to either find more funding – most likely at a national level, possibly reprioritising away from other sectors – or IRPTN costs must decrease."

It would seem that an end to public transport head butting is a long way off. **IFOCUS**

BRAZILIAN

REAL BUCKS THE RAND'S TREND



FRANK BEETON updates us on important bus news from Brazil

The foreign exchange value of the rand is a regular topic of conversation at many dinner table gatherings around South Africa. Recent events have seen the rand losing ground against the United States dollar, as well as the euro, Chinese yuan and Japanese yen – leading to a general perception that the local currency is going backwards.

However, there is one very significant exception to this trend, that being the Brazilian real. Whereas, in January 2014, one real would have been worth R4,55, in October 2015 its exchange value had reduced to R3,46.

Brazil is an important source of bus and coach chassis and bodies, and, to a lesser extent, truck products to South Africa; so this currency movement would have been highly beneficial to local importers.

If this trend continues, Brazil could gain considerable ground as an exporter of commercial vehicles. The following items of interest relating to bus products out of Brazil have recently been published in the global media:

- MAN Latin America recently launched its Volksbus 18.280 T low-entry Euro-5 bus chassis, to comply with new legislation, where low-floor buses are required for future operation in São Paulo city.

Whereas, in January 2014, one Brazilian real would have been worth R4,55, in October 2015 its exchange value had reduced to R3,46. This currency movement would have been highly beneficial to local importers.

This chassis is powered by a rear-mounted 204 kW (280 hp) MAN D08 EGR six-cylinder engine, driving through either a Voith Diwa 5 or ZF Ecolife fully automatic transmission, and is equipped with kneeling full-air suspension.

- Another new model is the steel-suspended 17,3-t GVM Volksbus 17.230 OD front-engined ladder-frame bus chassis, with set-back front axle. It is powered by a four-cylinder MAN D0834 engine coupled to a six-speed ZF synchromesh transmission.
- Globally active Brazilian bodybuilder and bus manufacturer Marcopolo, which has been in business for 66 years, recently celebrated production of its 400 000th vehicle. The landmark product was a Paradiso 1350 Generation 7 three-axle, medium/long-distance coach. It features new seats, greater luggage capacity, new interior lining, reading lights and toilet.
- Brazilian bus manufacturers are actively exploring opportunities for alternative

driveline buses.

Mercedes-Benz is jointly developing a dual hybrid-drive articulated bus with local company Eletra. This vehicle can operate as a trolleybus using overhead electrical power supply, or by using its diesel engine and regenerative braking to charge on-board batteries. This project is based on a 23-m Mercedes-Benz O 500 UDA underframe with four steering axles.

At the other end of the scale, Iveco has started local testing of its Daily Electric Minibus, a seven-metre, 19-passenger unit powered by an 80 kW MES-DEA electric motor. It is capable of 70 km/h maximum speed when loaded, and has a range of between 90 and 130 km on a single battery charge.

We believe that it will be prudent to keep a watchful eye on the Brazilian bus industry in the future, in order to monitor its progress in becoming an even more significant player in the global market. **| FOCUS**

BUS STOPS



TAXI RANKS MOVE INTO CYBERSPACE

A massive new project by Pandocom, Top 6 Taxi Management and the Sierra Group will see free Wi-Fi internet services rolled out at some 600 taxi ranks around South Africa.

The project launched at the Springs Taxi Rank, in Ekurhuleni, at the end of October. The first phase will allow approximately 36-million commuters per month free Wi-Fi connectivity within the bounds of the targeted taxi ranks.

"The importance of the taxi industry as a crucial link in connecting South Africans with their homes, workplaces, friends and families is well known; now commuters will also have the opportunity of accessing a different kind of connection – to the internet," says Isaiah Nkosi, president of Top 6 Taxi Management.

Pandocom's Daya Bramdaw explains the concept: "The solution will offer commuters access to an Education Portal that will host jobs, health information, financial literacy courses, small business enterprise development workshops and even sports news.

"For taxi drivers, there will be a Transport Education and Training Authority (TETA)-certified driver training skills programme, tips on defensive and offensive driving and even first-aid and firefighting courses."

The project is endorsed by the TETA Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) and will be run in accordance with the National Skills Development Act. "It will empower the more than 167 000 taxi drivers that fall under Top 6 Taxi Management, by enabling them to improve and hone their skills.

Upon successful completion of the driver training skills programme in the first phase, the intention is to provide Wi-Fi access within the taxis themselves, and create mobile hotspots within individual vehicles.

"Phase two will also see the continuation of the content development process, as well as an increase in the modules on the certified driver training course. Additional small business development workshops will also be added," says Bramdaw.

The Sierra Groups Fred Moturi adds: "Thanks to this investment in the latest technology, commuters will now benefit from the freedom of accessing content without the constraints of network speed or coverage issues."

SCANIA INTERLINKS TO THE FUTURE

It might be called the Interlink, but Scania's newest bus is nevertheless a single unit. In this case, the word refers to its versatility as the first complete gas-fuelled bus for suburban operations, which happens to be equally suited to shorter intercity travel.

Launched during October at Busworld Kortrijk 2015, the new Scania Interlink Low Decker is a bus for suburban operations, airport shuttle transfers, intercity journeys and school bus assignments. It joins the new Scania Interlink family along with the Medium Decker and High Decker versions.

"This bus provides previously unmatched versatility in the market, allowing operators to uncompromisingly tailor the bus to suit their operations," says Klas Dahlberg, head of buses and coaches at Scania.

The Scania Interlink Low Decker is offered with a range of engine options including bioethanol, diesel and biodiesel. The launch unit shown at Busworld featured Scania's 239 kW (320 hp) Euro-6 gas engine, which has been globally recognised for its excellent performance and the same drivability and torque as that of a diesel motor.

In addition, the unique-angled front has a lower weight and greater turning radius, which lowers fuel consumption and noise levels.

"We can now offer customers an opportunity to substantially reduce their CO₂ emissions, in line with the growing awareness of the urgent need to reverse global warming," says Dahlberg. "Cities around Europe are increasingly restricting the use of diesel and Scania provides the widest range of alternatives."

"We've taken the market's concerns to heart in designing this bus for the future," concludes Dahlberg.



PLEASE, ENOUGH ECO-BABBLE!



This month, this column writes itself. Those responsible for October Transport Month (OTM) usually churn out enough nonsense to fill two columns, leaving me with the problem of what to leave out

I want to focus on Gauteng, where there was one significant difference between 2014 and 2015. Usually the national and provincial Departments of Transport drive the OTM process.

This year, the province played a far more subdued role, leaving it to the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) to trumpet its “commitment” to better public transport through its sponsorship of the EcoMobility Festival (EMF).

My theory is that the Gauteng government, embarrassed by the continuing absence of Annexure F from the website of its 25-year plan, decided to lie low and let the CoJ go through the motions.

Sadly, the skeletons in the CoJ's cupboard are just as noisy as those of the province. Festivals such as these have become a case study in Hypocrisy 101. I remain baffled at the ability of government (at all three levels) to stubbornly continue to hide its failure to provide a decent public transport service by organising, or supporting, these bogus events.

The EMF website lists a number of “sponsors” and “partners”; most of them with flowery names based on eco-this, green-that or mobility-the-other. They even include a university or two.

I suspect that some of these hangers-on, whether local or overseas-based, are little more than fronts; first for the oil, road construction and motor lobby, and second, for the banks, which earn a big slice of

their income from financing private motor vehicles.

I would call them “shelf” organisations. They merely provide a veneer of eco-friendliness to a process, which is actually doing nothing to improve public transport in South Africa.

Here is an example: In the *Sunday Times* of October 11, we were told that the CoJ contributed R160 million to the EMF. Three days before that, in a cringe-worthy advertorial placed in *Business Day* by one of the “partners”, we read “now it is Johannesburg's turn to demonstrate leadership in the global efforts ... towards eco-mobility.

“During the Festival, leaders in urban government, experts, thought leaders and citizens will meet and share success stories, discuss case studies, and propose solutions. Technical papers will be presented and discussions will focus on the latest developments in the fields of transport ...

“At the conclusion, a ‘Declaration on Low-Carbon Urban Transport’ will be signed by delegates, international organisations and experts in transport and climate-change issues and then presented to the UN Climate Summit – COP21 – in Paris in December.”

No mention of integrating Metrobus and BRT, starting a through-ticket system, reorganising the route pattern, or fixing the timetable – only a load of waffle. After Paris, the circus moves to Quito, Ecuador, in 2016 – at least the delegates, experts and thought leaders will see some trolleybuses there!

It remains to be seen how long it will take South Africa to wake up to all this fooling around.

Back in 2007, one of the provincial OTM events was an arts competition. Kids were asked to draw a picture with a transport theme. First prize was a Sony PlayStation, or something like that.

Instead, kids should be required to make as many trips on public transport as possible, write an essay about their experiences, and make suggestions for improvements.

First prize should be one year of free travel on Putco. Second prize could be ten years of free travel on Sundays on Johannesburg's Metrobus. (For those who don't get the joke, Metrobus does not operate on Sundays!)

As an aside, the City of Ekurhuleni (which has BRT pretensions and was also represented at the Festival) shuts down its Boksburg bus depot at 16:00 every afternoon, just in time for the 22 buses based there to avoid the evening rush! Think of all the carbon emissions they save!

Finally, to round off our case study, let's quote Mark Smyth, Motoring Editor of *Business Day*. Having attended the EMF, he reports (October 13): “Astonishingly, parked in a new cycle lane was the official car of Johannesburg Metro MMC for Transport, Christine Walters”.

I'll leave it to you to speculate on whether things will improve in 2016. We can but hope ... **IFOCUS**



Vaughan Mostert developed a love for public transport early in life, which led to a lifelong academic interest in the subject. He recently retired as a senior lecturer from the Department of Transport and Supply Chain Management at the University of Johannesburg. Through *Hopping Off*, Mostert leaves readers with some parting food for thought as he continues his push for change in the local public transport industry.



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