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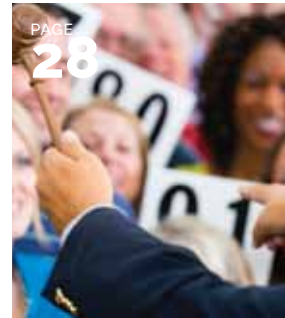
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FUTURE FANTASTIC!



I have seen the future of fleet management – and it looks utterly fabulous



CHARLEEN CLARKE

Recently I was invited to Munich, Germany, to attend a fleet-management workshop, which was hosted by FleetBoard. As 99 percent of our readers know, FleetBoard is Daimler's telematics solution. It's a pretty successful product offering, too; there are now about 220 000 vehicles on the roads around the world that are connected via FleetBoard.

The sector in which FleetBoard operates is probably one of the most dynamic within the transport industry. "Digitisation" and "connectivity" are two of the current buzzwords in our industry. Innovations are being announced on a weekly basis, but I must tell you that some of the new concepts mooted by the FleetBoard team at the workshop truly blew me away.

These new concepts go way beyond the realm of telematics solutions. As Daniela Gerd tom Markotten, managing director of Daimler FleetBoard, explained at the workshop, FleetBoard wants to deliver much more: "In the future, FleetBoard will provide far more than simply telematics solutions. FleetBoard will be the provider of digital solutions for the whole logistics industry," she explained.

Rowlands Peters, the head of FleetBoard South Africa, concurs. "We will accelerate the pace at which we innovate and we will interact with our global network in order to deliver cutting-edge local solutions.

"The changes we have planned will have a significant impact on our customers, and our efforts right now are centred around familiarising them with the future vision of FleetBoard, as well as the current innovations and digital solutions we offer for the transport and logistics segments," he says.

Some of the new concepts I witnessed in Munich

will probably come to South Africa; others will never see the light of day here. I'm hoping for more rather than less, because so many of these innovations would really help local transport operators. So here they are, in no particular order:

FLEETBOARD FUELHUB

Times are tough and fuel is costly. As such, some transport operators shop around for fuel. According to the FleetBoard team, this is quite common in Europe, where quotes to refill the operators' tanks are normally obtained by telephone from several suppliers. This obviously takes time...

Enter FuelHub, a digital marketplace for the purchase of fuel. It's a bit like one of those well-known travel websites – *Expedia*, for instance – but the suppliers sell fuel and not hotel rooms or flights. The transport operator receives an overview of the various fuel-related offers and a detailed comparison of prices. He (or she!) can place an order with the click of a mouse.

While the FleetBoard FuelHub is fabulous for transport operators (who will almost certainly save time and lower their fuel costs), suppliers benefit too – because they can reach more potential customers, while the automated sales process also increases their efficiency.

FuelHub is currently being piloted in Germany. Assuming that it gets the thumbs-up, it will be rolled out in Germany, and then in the rest of Europe.

FLEETBOARD NXTLOAD

Trucks running empty and downtime are the ultimate nightmares for any transport operator, and we all know that both scenarios play out all too often. In order to reduce these problems, various freight





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SCANIA

exchanges and other platforms for placing freight have been developed – in 2016, a whopping 200 such digital platforms were active in Europe. However, there are still lots of empty, or partially loaded trucks, on European roads.

FleetBoard's solution is *nxtload*, a meta search engine which seamlessly links all these digital solutions. Initially, the plan is to offer dispatchers the ability to book freight orders. In the longer term, further features, such as a corridor search, will also become available.

Incredibly, FleetBoard *nxtload* is planned as an open web page for all freight forwarders and will



be available free of charge. (We really like that price!)

FleetBoard *nxtload* is also being piloted, and *Trans.eu* and *Teleroute*, two important European freight exchanges, have already come on board. The six-month pilot phase began in May with selected customers in Germany, France, Poland and Spain.

Assuming that the pilot project is successful (and we see no reason why it shouldn't be), FleetBoard *nxtload* will be rolled out at the beginning of 2018.

SMARGO

Paper, paper, paper ... we all talk about e-commerce, but most drivers' cabs are still awash with various shipping documents, customs papers and bills of delivery, as well as safety data sheets, passes and special permits. Numerous trees die in the process!

However, this scenario doesn't just concern bunny huggers; having a paper trail is not the most efficient way of doing business. Things get lost, orders are processed at a snail's pace and inaccuracies predominate. Plus, of course, the customer cannot be billed until the paperwork has been completed.

With *Smargo*, that's a thing of the past. This Android app (extension to iOS is planned in a later phase) means that the consignor, truck driver and consignee can all access information about the order from absolutely anywhere! Furthermore, they can easily communicate with the individuals involved in the current transport order.

This open, cloud-based platform will initially take care of all the cargo documents and consignment notes. In time to come, *Smargo* will also facilitate the digitisation of documents pertaining to the loading/

unloading operations, including those pertaining to damage or excess/short quantities.

These documents will be stored centrally and also archived via *Smargo*. The detailed order data will also be viewable on a web portal in real-time.

Smargo is being piloted with BLG Logistics Group, a massive German company that employs some 16 000 people. This multilingual app will be available for download from the Google Play Store next year.

FLEETBOARD VEHICLE LENS

We all know that truck drivers should do a series of pre-trip checks before embarking on each and every journey. Alas, many don't – because it's a hassle, but, with the FleetBoard app *Vehicle Lens*, that's no longer the case!

This app, developed in conjunction with Berlin-based start-up company *Everybag*, identifies the vehicle by its number plate. At each relevant point of the truck, relevant information is superimposed in a process of augmented reality, for example: current tyre

pressure or wear data, information pertaining to mileage, the vehicle's next scheduled workshop visit, the previous driver and his route, information about the fuel level and the vehicle's specification. Initially the app will focus only on the truck, but in the future it could cover the trailer and its load.

The FleetBoard *Vehicle Lens* app is in the development phase. When ready, it will be available for Android and iOS. Initially it will only work on Mercedes-Benz trucks, but that could well change in the future.

DIGITAL VEHICLE SCANNER

FleetBoard is working with Daimler and a company called *Josef Paul* to develop a very clever digital vehicle scanner that detects scratches and scrapes. It will also note the air pressure of the tyres and depth of their tread and detect items such as roof or roll-up tarpaulins or tipping troughs.

The truck will need to drive through a contraption that resembles a carwash at walking pace ... and, voila ... all this information is recorded! This will obviously mean a huge reduction in time spent checking vehicles, plus very accurate recording of any damage. Can you imagine the implications for rental companies?

While these concepts – from the *FuelHub* to the vehicle scanner – are a long way down the line, FleetBoard is also eyeing other new technologies (augmented reality and *HoloLens*, for instance) and trying to figure out ways of using these technologies to make the logistics industry a better place. Watch this space for more news on these developments...

In conclusion, remember I said that the future looks fabulous? Well now you know why! **F**





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AN EFFORT BY ALL

The battle for safer roads continues and the transport industry (both the road freight and public sides) has a role to play



GAVIN MYERS

Current initiatives to improve road safety in South Africa was a hot topic at the 2017 Southern African Bus Operators Association (Saboa) conference, with Makhosini Msibi, CEO of the Road Traffic Management Corporation, speaking on that exact topic.

"Our roads are a shared space, but they are graveyards and that is something we must turn around," Msibi began, before highlighting that the South African population (of 56 million), is growing at two-percent per annum, while vehicle registrations increase at three-percent per annum. In 2016, there were 12 million...

"Our road infrastructure needs more space, especially in Gauteng, where 39 percent of the vehicle population is registered annually," Msibi added.

Fatal crashes are also rising – 2016 recorded the highest rate to date of 14 071, which is an 11-percent increase on 2015.

"This growing number is a failure, and we shouldn't wait to deal with it. The global average in 2015 was 17,4 fatalities per 100 000 people, South Africa's average was 26. The fiscus is losing R143 billion per annum (three percent of the gross domestic product in 2015) through road carnage."

How does the RTMC plan to deal with this? The National Road Safety Strategy, 2016 to 2030, approved by Cabinet on March 29, is the guiding

document. The aim is to reduce road fatalities by 50 percent per annum by 2030.

"This will not be possible without partnerships. We need to be direct and take decisive action when dealing with issues," Msibi said.

The strategy is based on five pillars: road safety management, safer roads and mobility, safer vehicles, safer road users, and post-crash response.

Msibi prioritised innovative education and effective, efficient law enforcement... "We are seeking a partnership with the Department of Education for road safety to become part of the school curriculum. The private sector can also make road safety part of its training," he said.

"Other priority areas are effective road-safety coordination, funding through investments and partnerships, addressing fraud and corruption, and the promotion of safety standards in line with SANS 39001."

Msibi called on institutions like Saboa to lend their support. "Of all commuters 42 percent use public transport, nine percent use buses and 27 percent use taxis. If just the bus industry can address its problems, it can deal with up to ten-percent of people at risk each year.

"The bus and taxi industries need to take care of their passengers, who are being killed as a result of the negligence of drivers and the owners of these businesses. People entrust their lives to public transport operators, which is the real cost of a fatal crash," he concluded. **F**

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VE Commercial Vehicles (VECV) – a joint venture of the Volvo Group and Eicher Motors – has established a 100-percent wholly owned subsidiary known as VECV South Africa (VECV SA), which is introducing Eicher trucks to South Africa

Eicher is a well-known name in the world of trucking – and for good reason! The company – a member of the Volvo Group (along with UD Trucks, Volvo Trucks, Renault Trucks and Mack Trucks) – has an established presence in more than 30 countries across the globe and an on-road population of over half a million trucks. Plus, the trucks are known to be both fuel efficient and advanced.

JOINT VENTURE WITH VOLVO GROUP

VECV, which was formed in July 2008, brings the best of two companies together. On the one hand, there is the Volvo Group's global expertise and world-class technology. Then there is the innovative engineering and proven fuel efficiency from Eicher. Together, this has resulted in the development of the Eicher Pro Series.

Surender Singh Rajpurohit, vice president and country head, VECV SA, says that the new trucks usher in "the pro league of trucking".

"The Eicher Pro Series is our next-generation truck series, designed to deliver maximum uptime and provide best-in-class fuel efficiency, a higher loading capacity and enhanced driver efficiency and safety," he tells **FOCUS**.

BUILT AND TESTED FOR SOUTH AFRICA

A medium commercial vehicle with an 8,5-t gross vehicle mass (GVM) and four to five-tonne payload, the Eicher Pro Series truck has been tested for more than 500 000 km across Africa and Asia.

Furthermore, it was subjected to rigorous endurance and performance testing for over 200 000 km in South Africa. It has also been field tested by local operators. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with operators praising the vehicle's fuel efficiency, comfort and durability.

The first truck to be launched in South Africa – the Eicher Pro 3008 – is powered by the Eicher E494; a four-cylinder, four-valve powerplant with common-rail system (CRS) technology.

In addition, the truck features the Volvo Group's Engine Management System, the EMS 3.0, which maintains the optimum balance between load demand, fuel efficiency and emission control.

The cab boasts a decidedly Japanese-like design, with all the necessary creature comforts. Safety features include an anti-lock braking system, airbrakes, three-point seatbelts and exhaust brakes.

RELIABLE NETWORK ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Eicher trucks will be available at 12 strategic locations across South Africa. VECV SA has partnered with well-established dealership groups such as Imperial Group, BB Motor Group, CMH Group, AAD Group, Billson Trucks, Fleet Dynamics Group and Premier Truck and Bus.

Rajpurohit says South Africa is a strategic market. "It will play a critical role in the future growth of VECV's international business. The company plans to continuously invest in the introduction of country-specific products and world-class aftersales support," he tells **FOCUS**.

WELL-PREPARED AFTERMARKET READINESS

VECV SA has joined forces with Bidvest Panalpina Logistics, its 3PL partner. "We have invested millions of rand in parts availability. Currently the warehouse stocks more than 2 600 line items," says Rajpurohit.

He is mindful of the importance of aftersales. "The local team has been proactively busy ensuring parts availability and has provided training to technicians. Parts availability and aftersales support are key investment areas," Rajpurohit concludes. **F**



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MICHELIN X MULTI RANGE

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MICHELIN Tyre Company South Africa has refined its current 315/70 tyre range by replacing the X MULTIWAY range with the new X MULTI tyre range. The X MULTI range has been designed to assist fleet operators to reduce their operating costs and improve their business efficiency.

The tread pattern with the addition of carbon on the X MULTI range significantly boosts mileage performance, and is more resistant to abrasions. The X MULTI range reduces fuel consumption and lowers cost per kilometre.

"The MICHELIN X MULTI range has added safety features which provide added safety for the driver, the load and other road users. It has enhanced the braking distance, the grip, traction and handling over the entire lifespan of the tyre. The resistance to shoulder damage has also been improved" says Yoliswa Nkomo, Operations Marketing Manager B2B.

Environmental factors were considered when developing the MICHELIN X MULTI tyre range, the tyres are re-groovable and have up to 88% retread acceptance rate, this extends the life of the tyre and saves raw material utilised to produce new tyres.

"MICHELIN Tyre Company South Africa believes that this tyre will be a more robust tyre to suite the current road conditions and the temperature range in South Africa" explains Yoliswa Nkomo.





Rolling with the **PUNCHES**

The annual Road Freight Association (RFA) Convention is never an event to be missed. GAVIN MYERS went along and found that the industry still faces a raft of problems

The more things change, the more they stay the same – so the saying goes. However, operators in the South African road-freight industry are used to this. Year after year, speakers and delegates at the RFA convention debate new proposed laws, South Africa's political and economic rollercoaster, and the ever-present problems of driver wellness and corruption.

Yet, the more these things change, the more they stay the same... For the industry, this means a continual barrage of punches leaving it wondering what to do next.

As Sharmini Naidoo, CEO of the RFA, began: "Trucks have every right to be on the roads and we stand a better chance of achieving a good outcome if road users are understanding of one another. Road safety is still an issue; the few incidents that involve trucks result in many deaths.

"Congestion is an issue that also affects truckers and costs the economy millions. Being able to meet on-time deliveries and lowering the cost of logistics is key to satisfying and maintaining customers.

"In the 42 years that the RFA has been in existence, we have faced a struggle with authorities who don't realise the full impact of regulations introduced to control the industry.

"The majority of operators strive to excel and run to world-class standards. However, constant cost pressures place a burden on profitability and have weighed heavily on the industry. Between March 2016 and February, 410 companies registered with the bargaining council closed, and 2 648 employees lost

their jobs," she said.

Many issues for discussion were not unfamiliar to the delegates. This was echoed by keynote speaker Chris Hlabisa, deputy director general: road transport, at the Department of Transport (DoT).

Hlabisa prefaced the issues with some statistics: "Research undertaken with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) indicates that annually more than R146 million is lost by the economy due to road crashes. Road fatalities have become a societal matter; they come second only to HIV/Aids... There's no way we're going to reach the 2020 vision for road safety ... we need to work together with all sectors of society and I know the road-freight sector can play a major role."

While the DoT has had the National Road Safety Strategy passed by Cabinet (find more details on page 6), Hlabisa was eager to point out that the enactment of the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (Aarto) Act is imminent.

"Aarto is going to be our living bible... Parliament has reviewed it and it will go for final public comment soon," he said.

Discussing long-distance fatigue, Hlabisa pointed out that the condition of most cross-border trucks entering the country is shocking, and encouraged delegates to look after the health of their drivers.

Then Hlabisa addressed the elephant in the room: amendments to the National Road Traffic Act that have been in the air since 2015.

"Regarding the movement of freight from road to rail – we are reviewing this under the National Transport Master Plan, which seeks to cover all modes





of transport, especially land transport.

"We want to move cargo from roads to rail, but the challenge is that rail does not function well. We would like to engage with all role players as to how to accomplish this; it will take time to revamp the rail system to cope and be efficient..

"We understand trucks play a pivotal role as far as our gross domestic product (GDP) is concerned; they make up 58 percent of the on-road transport network, so the two modes

THE SILENT KILLER

Ben Bezuidenhout, chief business development officer at Drive Risk, discussed the dangers of having fatigued drivers behind the wheel.

The stats are frightening ... according to Drive Risk's own research, falling asleep accounts for 24-percent of all heavy-vehicle accidents in South Africa. Eight in ten drivers reported that their sleeping time is interrupted during long-distance trips. 62-percent admitted to nodding off at the wheel and eight percent have dozed off while driving in the past six months.

In another study undertaken with the University of Johannesburg, fatigue was fifth on the list of causes of severe road crashes.

"Fatigue, itself, is just one element of the problem," said Bezuidenhout. "It is important to understand that there are consequences of fatigue and there must be risk management strategies to deal with it.

"Giving drivers caffeine and stimulants, or telling them to open the window or play music will not help if they are drowsy; sleep is the only cure," he added.

According to Bezuidenhout, it is difficult to detect fatigue, but some tell-tale signs are wandering and disconnected thoughts, misperception, or seeing things.

Drivers are at highest risk between 21:00 and 06:00, while drivers with known sleep disorders have an increased likelihood of falling asleep behind the wheel. Not getting at least six hours of sleep triples the likelihood of being involved in a collision.

"This is information that should be shared with drivers, but a major problem is the behaviour linked to fatigue and what the company does to manage the risk – from which the driver's take their cue," said Bezuidenhout.

"There needs to be shared responsibility, but the issue of management buy-in is sometimes the biggest problem. An organisation's safety climate is indicative of driving behaviour and predictive of crash involvement. Risky behaviour starts within the company; it comes from top management," he noted. "Occupational health and safety should be taken into account in the trucks as well as the building."

According to Bezuidenhout, evidence-based identification of the first two sleep stages will help identify the drowsy driver. This needs real-time monitoring, though.

He added that typical fatigue-related crashes occur in the early morning and mid-afternoon, are usually serious or fatal, involve single vehicles mainly on high-speed roads, there is no attempt to avoid the crash, and the driver is usually alone.

"You can survive for three to four weeks with no food, three to four days with no water, three to four hours with no shelter, and three to four seconds when behind the wheel with a lack of sleep. It only takes a few seconds of nodding off for an accident to occur," Bezuidenhout concluded.



PBS PILOT NEARS COMPLETION

Paul Nordengen, principal researcher at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, discussed the future of the performance-based standards (PBS) project.

It has been ten years since the first two South African PBS vehicles entered operation in the timber industry. In the years since, 165 "smart trucks" have been commissioned and by the end of the year, 365 000 trips; 42.2 million kilometres; 11 million litres of fuel and 29 000 t of CO₂ will have been saved.



Furthermore, crash rates within the PBS project are 55 percent lower than baseline – 1.45 crashes per million kilometres versus 2.25 – saving around R50 million.

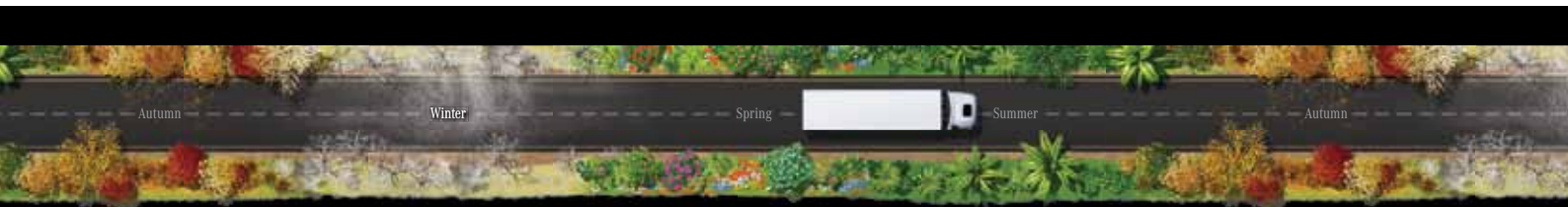
As the project approaches its target of 100-million kilometres (which should have been reached by the time you read this) it is clear that there is a great advantage to be had from its improved performance

must complement each other. There is a danger of collapsing the economy if they have to compete, but we will reclassify certain cargo to rail, such as hazardous chemicals," Hlabisa said.

He noted that further engagement is needed with regard to revised speed limits.

"We have received lots of comments about the amendments. We will not push legislation down your throats. We seek to consult with all role players and will not do ridiculous things that will kill our economy," Hlabisa concluded.

The topic of the amendments continued into the main panel discussion, chaired by Gavin Kelly, technical and operations manager of the RFA. The idea was to further unpack the proposed truck ban, reduction in speed limits and the requirement to redo the practical driving licence test upon renewal. The fact that Hlabisa sat on the panel undoubtedly provided an opportunity for the industry representatives to voice their concerns once more.



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TRUCK BAN

"This would drastically impact our operations. A lot of stock movement takes place during the ban times. The knock-on effects include increased pricing, more vehicles on the road to meet demand and opportunity for theft of high-risk product if trucks are delayed," said Kevin Kamoran, national transport manager, Nestle.

"It will require a complete rethink of line-haul transport and secondary distribution. There needs to be a complete assessment - what are the objectives?" asked Abdool Kader Tayob, CEO of Bakers.

"The abnormal-loads industry is already subject to limited hours, with further restricted hours they'll be left with 60 operating hours out of 168 potential hours in a week. The transport industry will go down from 60 to 40 operating hours a week. Productivity and margins will go down. Prices and product costs will go up with no increase in profit; which is what is taxed and generates revenue for the country," said Kevin van der Merwe, from ATL Mobility.

"We recognise and acknowledge the impact this will have on logistics. The regulations were gazetted in May 2016 to stimulate discussion, but we still believe it's the way to go regarding road

standards, aided by sophisticated computer software.

However, as Nordengen was quick to point out, while technology moves quickly, legislation always lags behind.

"While KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo have been actively involved, we need support from all nine provinces, as their MECs will have input as to the way forward," he said.

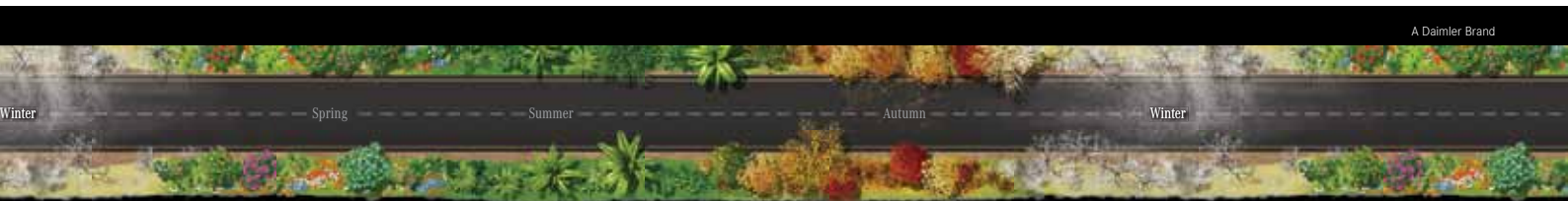
"Because some provinces are not keen on the project, it is difficult for operators to run the vehicles nationally. The Department of Transport (DoT) must help open doors."

Other concerns by operators have been an unhappiness about the self-regulatory Road Transport Management System (RTMS) being a prerequisite (this is needed to set a minimum standard), and unfair competition, due to the advantages of running a PBS vehicle.

As Nordengen explained, there is still much work to be done.

"We will compile a PBS evaluation report, for which we're developing a smart-truck portal to consolidate all the data. We're also busy with further research into the structures of roads, and, if the initiative goes further, there has to be full compliance. This will include the use of real-time monitoring, even including on-board load cells.

"We will have to sit down with the provinces and the DoT to decide the way forward. Depending on this outcome, we will have to update legislation to accommodate these vehicles. They are not meant to interfere with the abnormal-loads industry, or the road to rail debate," he said.



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safety. We will, however, listen to captains of industry like the RFA and not just push the topic. We need to navigate through the negative implications," responded Hlabisa.

DRIVER'S TEST

"The intention is probably good and there is some logic – one's psychomotor abilities decrease with age – but the practicalities are challenging. Licensing departments are under strain as it is.

"Implementing this law will increase stress among drivers and therefore also increase fatigue. Why are we not looking at other alternatives such as regulating recruitment and training within companies?" asked Gertzen Schlemmer, head of HCM Consulting, Gijima.

Kelly added: "What impact will it have on drivers who received their licences decades ago, and who will now have to relearn a new system? They will probably fail."

Van der Merwe, agreed: "Experienced drivers will have to learn 50 modules and then only might pass. It will cost a fortune and increase corruption, because licenced drivers need to sustain their licences to remain employed. There are loads of implications."

"I think testing of drivers is a must... drivers need to refresh their skills," Hlabisa retorted.

"Aarto will raise the stakes (of losing licences) if drivers drive badly. We want to clean the system by ensuring those in the system are real, competent drivers."

SPEED LIMIT REDUCTIONS

"This will create time issues, increase fatigue of drivers and possibly add to congestion. Going to the root causes will be more effective than trying to treat the symptoms. It could force a lot of companies to look at running at night, or implementing extra shifts at an extra cost, to make up the time," said Tayob.

"We do not have the resources to upgrade infrastructure throughout the country. We are dealing with a range of issues, so we need people to comply with the laws. Reducing speed limits will be a zonal approach. We are almost there in terms of introducing 24-hour traffic law-enforcement shifts," Hlabisa commented.

So, what's the way forward? It was Tayob who perhaps summed it up best: "Safety first is the vital objective, but four aspects influence this: vehicle fitness, driver fitness, road infrastructure and legislation, compliance and enforcement.

"A quality management system that drives self-regulation will go a long way. Overseas countries have full-time task teams to address these issues, it's not ad hoc like it is in South Africa..."

Despite there being a range of topics for discussion – such as cleaner mobility, corruption, the impact of junk status and the current political outlook – it was clear that the industry remains desperate to have its concerns heard. Will the problems be dealt with by the 2018 RFA conference, or will it be a case of the more things change, the more they stay the same? **F**

GETTING FROM PORT TO POINT

Congestion at Durban Harbour is a huge problem that has impacted the South African road-transport industry for many years. Derek Moe, from transport consulting firm Moe and Company, chaired the panel discussion.

Sue Moodley, chairperson for Harbour Carriers: KwaZulu-Natal, painted the picture: "Challenges identified by Harbour Carriers at Durban Harbour include: inadequate supply of equipment on the land side; inefficiency – each shift impacts the next, adding to congestion; there is no workable contingency plan for adverse weather conditions, creating queues; planning teams work in silos and not towards a quick turnaround; the spread of work over towers is not equal; and leadership in key decision-making roles changes every two years, meaning there is no continuity of discussion.

"Port inefficiency results in increased standing time and, therefore, loss of revenue, driver fatigue, loss of work, higher wages, penalties imposed by clients who are unaware of the port's challenges, and missing operating hours at depots.

"As a result of this, some businesses shut down or venture into other opportunities to sustain their businesses. Some operators choose to work directly with warehouses or depots. The situation has remained unchanged since the most recent engagements in May 2016," she said.

Anthony Naicker, director of transport, risk, fleet management and procurement at City Logistics, concurred, adding: "There has been too much discussion ... Transnet has made many commitments and I have to question whether the leadership has the foresight, or grit, to see them through.

"It is a very unpopular part of the industry ... inefficiency and lack of regulation have driven corruption and bribery. Our global partners question why the cost of logistics is so high in South Africa – which we have to justify with

telematics data to prove how long the trucks are sitting at the port."

Krish Maharaj, MD of Freight 24, suggested that the situation has been accepted for far too long. "In 20 years the problem has not changed, but the inefficiency has multiplied. The transporter is a highly valued member of the supply chain, but this is disrespected by Transnet.

"Investors look at ports as a key infrastructure entry point. If the port is inefficient, it drives them away and impacts on the economy. When additional costs are incurred, they are passed on to the consumer. That pushes up inflation and the poorest are hit hardest ... are state-owned enterprises out to make the poor poorer?" he challenged.

"There has to be collaboration, I agree, but 80 percent of the problem is in Transnet, itself," said Maharaj.

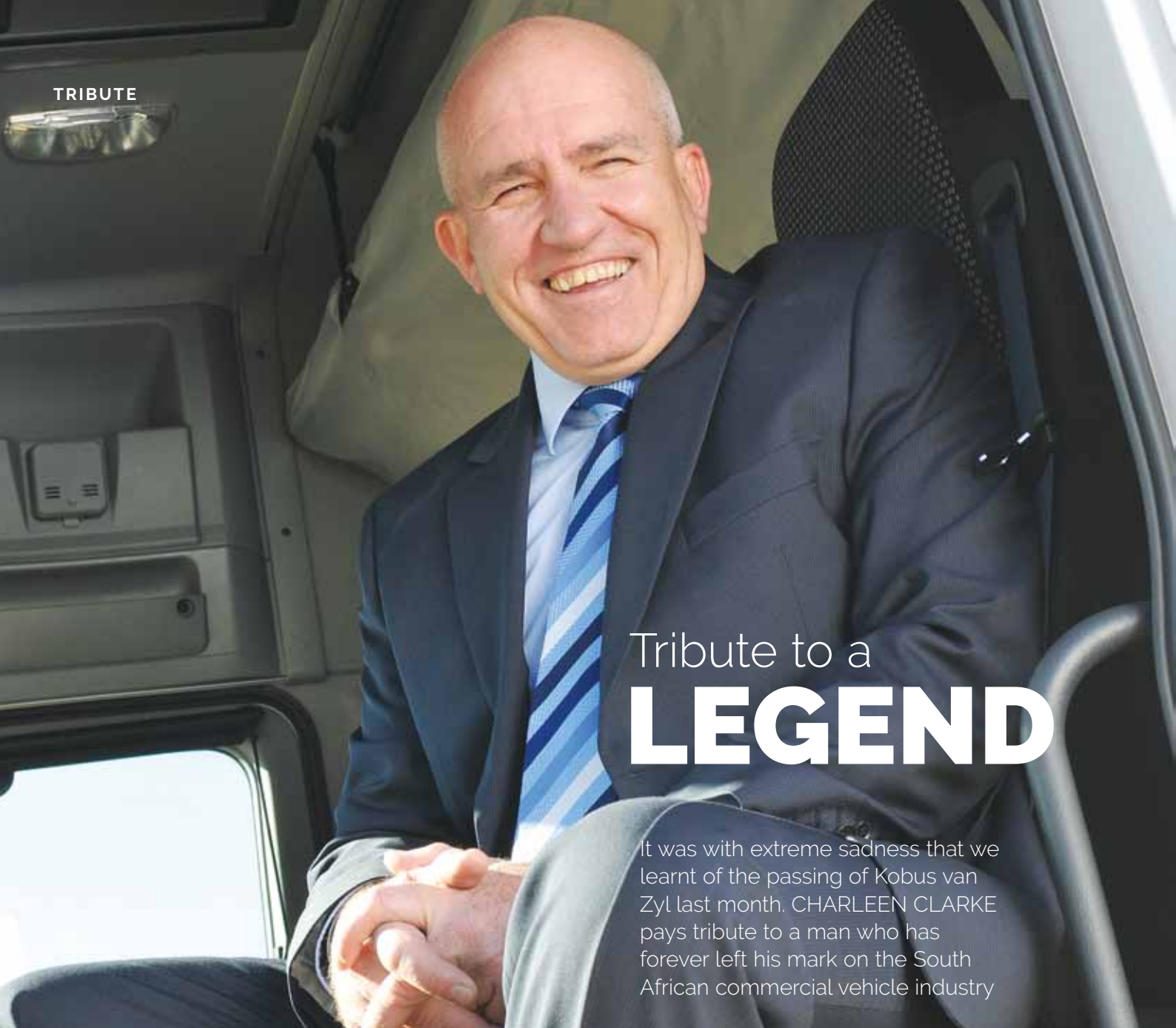
Finally, Mzukisi Mbanga, manager: Capacity Creation and Enablement, Transnet Ports Authority, disagreed. "The solution is not up to Transnet only; it is an industry problem that impacts Transnet and all the stakeholders in the supply chain. Solutions must come from all partners."

Mbanga discussed some possible solutions: "We have implemented the Terminal Operator Performance Standards to improve efficiency among terminal workers. We have also developed the Haulier Operator Performance Standard; a process for all stakeholders to discuss how to address the problem.

"These discussions have led to key performance indicators and the decision to measure the total time of a truck in the terminal. We didn't have an independent way of measuring truck turnaround time, but are looking at telematics systems to create this base to move forward.

"The group CEO of Transnet added the component of Bayhead road, so that we can also evaluate time spent there by trucks. We need to have a system where trucks can book a slot and fetch their containers that are ready and waiting for them at that time."





Tribute to a **LEGEND**

It was with extreme sadness that we learnt of the passing of Kobus van Zyl last month. CHARLEEN CLARKE pays tribute to a man who has forever left his mark on the South African commercial vehicle industry

Truth be told, I cannot remember when I first met Kobus. I know that it was a very long time ago; in fact, I cannot recall a time when he was not a part of the truck and bus industry. I think that this had a lot to do with his nature; Kobus was the sort of guy who had a real presence. Generally speaking, he wasn't loud or rowdy, but – despite his unassuming nature (he really was a humble man) – he was hard to miss...

I guess I probably first met Kobus about 18 years ago, when he joined DaimlerChrysler Services, the vehicle financing arm of what was then DaimlerChrysler. He was appointed sales director at DaimlerChrysler Services, then as divisional head for the Mercedes-Benz truck and bus unit, before being appointed executive director of Daimler Trucks and Buses.

It was probably only in about 2008 that I truly got to know Kobus, and learnt something about his life pre-Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA). I was interested to discover that he was previously a banker, chicken farmer and even a pub owner!

Kobus was born in Namibia. The eldest of five

children, he spent his school holidays at his father's service station in Okahandja, where diesel crept into his veins. After completing his BCom (Hons) in financial management at the University of the Orange Free State, Kobus obtained an MBA from the University of Stellenbosch Business School.

At this stage, he certainly didn't imagine a career in trucking. Rather, he headed for the glamorous and high-flying world of finance, but, along the way, he ended up selling trucks.

No one was more surprised than Kobus. "I often say to my kids that, if someone had told me I would one day be involved in sales, I would never have believed it. I like finance, computers, balance sheets and things like that. Sometimes I wake up in the morning, shake my head and think that all this is just not possible..." he told me one day.

Of course, this area of responsibility makes perfect sense if you knew Kobus; he was – first and foremost – a people's person. The business of selling trucks is, after all, all about people – and so it's hardly surprising that he excelled at this task.

I put this to him one day and he smiled. "Ya Charleen, you're right. It's true that this whole business is about interfacing with customers. It's about looking a customer in the eye and saying that I am sorry ... because something has gone wrong ... but I will sort it out."

Kobus was very, very good at that: he regarded himself as a partner to the customer. He never ever put himself up on a pedestal; he didn't sit in an ivory tower. I was amazed to discover, one day, that he didn't get annoyed when customers phoned in the middle of the night.

"My cellphone number is on my card and I take calls at any time. Just last week, a customer phoned me at 01:30 in the morning, saying 'my lorry staan' (my truck has broken down)," he told me in an interview in 2012.

While Kobus cared about his customers, he also cared about helping people. One day we were at the now-defunct Johannesburg International Motor Show, and Kobus told me about a new programme called the Mercedes-Benz Star Programme.

"It's a challenge attracting young people to the world of trucks; everyone wants to join Mercedes-Benz in order to design cars. I decided to launch this programme, and so I went to Mercedes-Benz in Germany and explained that I needed a lot of money," he told me, with a big chuckle.

"We have 11 kids on the programme; it's a real passion of mine. I am mentoring a wonderful guy called Kgothatso Maseko. I asked him why he was planning to come and work for us and he told me that, when he gets home from school, there is no food there. His goal is to have full cupboards at home for his family. I am so proud that we can help him achieve his goal," Kobus told me at the time.

While Kobus had the ability to think strategically, he was also very much hands-on – in the literal sense of this term. He had his Code 14 licence, for instance. "If you can't drive it, you can't sell it," he used to love to say.

I was so impressed when, back in 2012, he arrived at the start of our Truck Test, and then hopped into the cab of an Actros to drive the first leg of the route to Durban. En route, he even had a brush with the boys in blue!

He thought that it was terribly funny at the time. "Pulled over! Can you believe it? We were just outside Harrismith when we drove past a police vehicle. As we went past, I pressed the hooter to wave at them – and they then proceeded to follow us with lights blazing!"

Naturally, Kobus had to find a safe place to stop.

"This 'damaged' my fuel consumption, but the police were actually friendly. And, once they realised what we were busy with, they let us go quite quickly. For me, this was a taste of what drivers experience every day. I can now add this experience to my CV, too," he told us at the time.

Last year Kobus had something else to add to his CV: he was offered the job of general manager for National Automotive Industries in Saudi Arabia. Kobus was responsible for Mercedes-Benz Trucks, Vans, Buses and Special Trucks, as well as Western Star and Freightliner Trucks. He and his wife, Lynette, moved to Saudi Arabia to embark on yet another chapter in their lives.

I met up with Kobus at the IAA in Hannover late last year and we spent a couple of hours together on the Daimler stand, catching up. He told me that he had



thought long and hard before moving to Saudi, but that he was very happy there. There was, however, one big disadvantage: he didn't like being so far from his children, Pierre, Mignon and Marlon, who he adored.

However, in true Kobus fashion, he did deal after deal in Saudi. In April, we chatted after he had concluded a 540-truck deal with the Saudi transport

group Al Khaldi from Damman.

It was endearing to see that his sense of excitement was palpable; Kobus had such a lust for life. "We are so thrilled with this deal. It's certainly one of the biggest deals ever in our market, and the incredible thing is that all the trucks were sold with service contracts," he told me.

The transaction was thanks to his hard work, but, in typical Kobus fashion, he remained as humble as ever, attributing the deal to his many decades of working in South Africa. "To be honest, I am so grateful for what I learned in South Africa from our trucking customers and their incredible focus on life-cycle management," he told me.

When I wrote about this deal, I noted: "We have only one thing to say: well done boet!"

I now say this: "We're really going to miss you boet!"

There will never be another Kobus. **F**



Cheap imports threaten

THE GLOBAL TYRE MARKET

More countries are considering anti-dumping tariffs on cheap imported tyres, which are threatening tyre markets across the globe. MARISKA MORRIS investigates

Tyre manufacturers accusing Chinese companies of "dumping" cheap tyres on the local market is not a new phenomenon and is spreading across the globe. In 2009, former United States (US) President Barack Obama approved a tariff of 25 to 35 percent on light-truck tyres imported from China for three years.

The following year, the number of tyres imported to the US from China dropped by 28 percent and the number of tyres manufactured locally rose by nearly 14 percent. However, experts believe this had very little to do with the tariff and more with the recovering economy at the time. Current US President Donald Trump wants to put a 45-percent tariff on all goods imported from China.

Another country seriously debating anti-dumping tariffs is India. The number of truck and bus tyres that are imported has grown by nine percent to 120 000 units per month in 2017. These tyres account for 40 percent of the replacement demand in India.

Most of the tyres imported into India are from China (92 percent). The Indian Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association is now pleading with India's Ministry of Commerce to impose anti-dumping duty tariffs.

In 2012, the South African Tyre Manufacturers' Conference (SATMC) unsuccessfully applied to the International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa to impose anti-dumping duties on tyres

imported from China. After this application failed, the SATMC approached the South African Revenue Service (SARS).

It proposed a mass-based methodology to determine tyre import duties in 2016. SARS rejected this proposal stating that it would infringe on the World Trade Organisation and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade rules. Despite these failed attempts, the SATMC is still looking for ways to regulate the importation of cheap tyres.

In an interview with *Business Report*, SATMC chairman Riaz Haffejee claimed that tyre importers under-declared the value of the imported tyres.

"Cheap imports drive down the quality of tyres we have on the roads, which increases the risk of accidents and breakdowns," says Yoliswa Nkomo, operations marketing manager at Michelin Tyres.

"Cheap imported tyres are rarely retreaded, which puts the retread market at risk. Resources are wasted in attempting to retread these tyres, or having the casings fail once they have been retreaded. The question of the quality control of the cheap imported tyres is also a factor," Nkomo notes.

"The biggest concern, (which does not affect only the tyre industry) is the environmental impact of cheap imports. It results in the replacement of new tyres and casings at a much faster rate.

"A quality casing can be retreaded multiple times and therefore has a much smaller impact on the environment. Cheap imported tyres have a shorter



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Cheap imports drive down the quality of tyres we have on the roads, which increases the risk of accidents.

lifespan, which results in more tyres in the landfills," Nkomo says.

It is also important to protect the local market to secure job opportunities. "The biggest difference between locally manufactured and cheap imported tyres is the creation of jobs and the support of local talent," Nkomo says. It is estimated that the local tyre manufacturing industry provides 5 500 people with direct employment.

Another factor to be considered is that the Recycling and Economic Development Initiative of South Africa (Redisa) was placed in provisional liquidation in early June. It is the only approved tyre-waste plan for South Africa. Water and Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa filed an urgent application for the liquidation shortly after Redisa announced it would no longer collect tyre waste.

Redisa cited a lack funds as its reason for halting all operations, due to changes in the environmental tyre levy. Since February, all tyres have been levied at R2,30 per kilogram. Instead of these funds being paid directly to Redisa, they are now paid to SARS and deposited into the National Revenue Fund. Budget allocations are then made to Redisa through the Department of Environmental Affairs.

In 2012, various organisations, including the SATMC, launched court applications opposing the approval of Redisa. They urged Molewa to approve more than one tyre-waste plan for the country.

If Redisa were to close, it will have a massive impact on the tyre industry, as dealers will no longer have a method of removing or disposing of waste

tyres. This will most likely result in a growing number of tyre-waste at landfills. It will also have a significant impact on jobs.

In her address to parliament regarding the 2016/17 Department of Environmental Affairs budget vote, Molewa stated that 226 small businesses and 3 112 jobs were created through Redisa.

While this issue is being resolved, Nkomo suggests government assist the industry by controlling cheap tyre imports.

"Government can perhaps increase the level of quality control that goes into the production of the imported tyres, or limit the number that can be imported. It can also increase the import tax on Chinese tyre imports," says Nkomo.

She believes that the tyre industry can also assist in preventing cheap tyre imports by providing education to its clients. "Education and information needs to be passed on to the end users and dealers about the pitfalls of purchasing cheap, inferior products, and the effect it has on local jobs, the environment and the safety of all concerned," Nkomo concludes. **F**

Giving the FLEET MANAGER his due

To run a cost-effective road-transport operation, it is essential that companies give their fleet managers the full authority and responsibility to do their job, writes VIC OLIVER

In a recent article published in **FOCUS**, I wrote about the importance of the key functions that a heavy-vehicle transport manager, and/or owner, must carry out in order to minimise costs and optimise profits.

Transport managers cannot succeed, however, if they are not given full authority and responsibility. Sadly, fleet managers in many large corporations in South Africa are not able to manage and control all the elements of their job, due to the company structure that gives other departments – like marketing or operations – control of drivers and the movement of the fleet.

In these situations, the main priority of marketing managers is to deliver the goods and they will often override the fleet manager's request for the vehicle to be serviced, and send it out on a delivery. Even more concerning is when an un-roadworthy vehicle is sent out. This situation often occurs repeatedly, with the result that vehicles are not maintained and serviced correctly.

While fleet managers are usually expected to control all the variable operating costs – like fuel, repairs, maintenance and tyres – they often experience a lack of authority and control over drivers.

Trying to control a fleet of vehicles and work within a maintenance budget is virtually impossible without having control of the drivers, as they are the key element in determining the fuel, maintenance and tyre costs of the vehicle.

Drivers can reduce or increase these costs depending on their driving style and attitude. Factors such as speed, harsh braking, excessive idling, green-band driving, as well as clutch and brake operation, all have a direct influence on all the variable cost factors of a fleet.

To ensure that drivers are correctly trained and

motivated, and that they adopt the right attitude to caring for the vehicle, fleet managers also need to control and manage driver training. When the management of drivers falls under other departments in large corporate companies, they often adopt the attitude that the driver's job is to drive the vehicle and not be concerned about caring for it. If the vehicle breaks down, it is someone else's problem.

Many senior managers in large companies regard the vehicles in the fleet as secondary to the main function of their business, and therefore override the fleet manager who is endeavouring to discipline a driver, or get a vehicle into the workshop for maintenance.

Another common problem that affects the fleet manager's function is when the general manager instructs him or her to cut back on vehicle maintenance, in order to curtail expenses so that the company can show a healthy overall profit at the end of the term.

It is alarming to find how many heavy commercial vehicles are not serviced and maintained according to the manufacturer's recommended servicing schedules, as a result of these factors.

Vehicle manufacturers are endeavouring to extend service intervals, which reduces operating costs and makes the vehicle more available. However, it then becomes critical that services are undertaken at the stipulated time to optimise the life of the vehicle and reduce variable costs in the long term.

In many companies, especially where transport is not the core business, managers do not understand the negative long-term financial cost of not maintaining vehicles and giving the fleet manager the authority to control and monitor both the fleet and drivers.

To be effective, transport managers need the support of senior management and the cooperation of all the other departmental heads. **F**



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!



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At a recent conference in the United Kingdom (UK), information was given on how the fleet industry is going to change dramatically with the advent of connected cars and the arrival of "big data". A similar conference was held in Johannesburg two years ago. COLIN WINDELL explores the topic

The fleet industry is set to undergo a "massive revolution" with the introduction of the connected car and the arrival of so-called "big data", while contract hire companies will transform into analytics businesses that lease vehicles.

This was the main message from the conference, but why is the UK important? In terms of the total percentage of new vehicles bought each year with some level of corporate funding, South Africa leads the field at more than 85 percent. The UK sits second on the list at around 52 percent, but it is way ahead if this figure is translated into unit volume terms.

Nevertheless, the South African fleet industry is a sophisticated entity, despite the fact South Africans still largely prefer vehicle ownership over full-maintenance leasing, and corporates therefore carry these depreciating assets on their books.

While there is a high level of sophistication – even for the "old school" fleet bosses still managing fleets on spreadsheets – the developments in technology are beginning to outpace some of the corporate thinking on vehicle management.

Nick Mitchell, Audi UK's service and technical manager, said: "The arrival of the connected car will

result in massive changes in the way people use cars as well as in the application and provision of cars. Technology will be updated before our eyes. We are about to go through a massive revolution."

At the local conference – sponsored by Mercedes-Benz's FleetBoard division – the two main themes around telematics were that it will be used as a predictive tool (rather than analysing what had already happened) and that there was still both resistance and confusion on the matter. The theme was the same in the UK.

The arrival of "big data" brings "transformational change" to contract hire and leasing companies. Craig McNaughton, corporate director of Lex Autolease, has forecast that data analysis will enable fleet owners to "predict the future" in terms of vehicle service, maintenance and repairs, as well as driver behaviour, thus taking away uncertainty for fleet operation.

This massive techno-shift is not localised. It is happening in South Africa, the UK, the United States (US), Europe, and wherever road transport and fleet management is required. Conferences come and go – and usually impart information to a small percentage of the actual target base, with an even smaller

percentage actually implementing that knowledge.

The comments made at the local conference still hold true and are worth repeating as a reminder to fleet operators that they will have to embrace and deal with these changes and the new technology that comes with them.

Fleet expert and managing director of DPS South Africa, Charel Schickerling, said telematics was just one element of fleet management, adding: "Some telematics suppliers do not fully understand all the ways in which it could be applied – and they need to, so they can impart this to their customers. Telematics systems today are extremely sophisticated."

Kim Anderson, from T-Systems, says: "Everything that can 'talk' to something else on a digital platform,



On any large truck there are probably five or more SIM cards for engine and driver management, manufacturer data collection, hijack and theft systems, route management (GPS) and the driver's cellphone.

will do so; everything that can be digitised will be. That is the point. The information is out there; it is how we manage and interpret it that counts."

He pointed out that some modern cars have seven times more software on board than a Boeing 787 and it is not uncommon for company IT departments to run at just ten percent of the purchased computing capacity.

"Some 85 percent of IT spend is 'non-differentiating' to the company and lies dormant as data records. It is time to move up to systems of engagement (such as *Twitter* and *Facebook*) and systems of intelligence comprising connected real-time information, automated machine learning and predictive analysis," he said.

David Lubinsky, a director of Opsi Systems, reminded us that the cellphone has been the single most disruptive piece of technology ever, and has turned the entire world "upside down".

"The cellphone and the constant flow of data have made a lot of things possible," he said. "On any large truck there are probably five or more SIM cards for engine and driver management, manufacturer data collection, hijack and theft systems, route management (GPS) and the driver's cellphone.

"This means it is now possible to create a closed circle of management with the ability to schedule many vehicles and jobs (including next-day planning of all available jobs and adding jobs as they happen),

plan and execute real-time events and provide a dashboard summary by vehicle, trip and job.

"The second is the mobile phone where an app (which is tightly integrated with a scheduler), can manage complex workflows, navigation, handle calls and add vehicle stops dynamically.

"The next element is monitoring, where all mobile events are displayed at head office and show start of day, workflow events at stops, end of day, delivery items and proof-of-delivery notes. There is live tracking of all vehicles, along with planned and actual locations of all events.

"The final part of the system is to have a workflow editor and to customise the application (by depot and stop type) in a way that makes it simple to input information onto a form that can be quickly printed or emailed."

Highly significant in the South African context is the fact that 67 percent of drivers are willing to change their behaviour. This is the highest percent of all countries surveyed by Towers Watson UK.

Presenting the findings, actuarial consultant for the company, Bhavisha Goolab, said: "We surveyed 100 000 individuals in the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Canada, Brazil and South Africa in 2013 and 2014."

While primarily interested in insurance, Goolab says: "This is powerful, because it means that, if implemented properly, in South Africa telematics could have a very significant effect on a portfolio if risky behaviour is accurately identified and improved upon.

"And to be able to identify and feed the effects of this risky behaviour back to drivers, data then becomes key and the foundation of telematics itself."

Peter Olyott, chief executive officer of Indwe Risk Services, said user-based insurance is going to become more prevalent and telematics will enable insurers to instantly update rates based on usage – so trucks experiencing downtime will get lower premiums until they are back on the road again.

The advent of the connected vehicle will enable drivers to download functionality that physically changes a model's characteristics and specification with a huge potential impact in numerous areas of fleet operations.

Sharing and using personal-vehicle user data is a big issue and many leading lawyers have advised businesses to update employment contracts, terms and conditions and codes of conduct to reflect the new world of "big data".

Huge amounts of data will be generated and what happens to that data is the question. It is crucial to ensure it is being ethically handled. Fleet operators need to plan how they will use that information and must inform their employees.

Today's connectivity is the start of the journey towards the autonomous vehicle and, while the secure exchange of data builds the foundations for new business activities and applications, there are significant risks and challenges regarding safety, security and privacy that need to be addressed. **F**



HINDSIGHT, FORESIGHT AND INSIGHT

Almost unrecognisable from what it was 31 years ago, Ctrack by Inseego's business of tracking and telematics has evolved to be a total business solution. GAVIN MYERS chats to Hein Jordt, MD of Ctrack

Ctrack by Inseego needs no introduction to readers of **FOCUS**. It has been an integral partner in the success of our Truck Test programme since its inception in 2012, and has provided accurate telematics data, which has ensured the most credible results possible.

However, the solutions in Ctrack's arsenal are so much more advanced than simple track-and-trace. As Jordt explains, it's now all about being proactive.

"When we started the business, it was all reactive. Today, it's not just about where the truck is and what it's doing, but also how the driver behaves, projections on time of arrival, optimising the fleet as a whole, and assisting the operator to maximise the benefit of the solution and operational efficiencies of his vehicles," he explains.

It is a highly dynamic environment that requires constant innovation, collaboration and support.

Everything Ctrack does is guided by five key management areas. "Every operation has a requirement for any one of these five pillars to fully

and effectively manage its assets," says Jordt.

It begins with asset management and risk management. No matter how many vehicles there are in a fleet, risks always need to be managed and reduced. "Software reports and alarms have been developed to alert and mitigate risks for fleet owners and operators as far as possible," Jordt notes.

Cost management is another pillar and a crucial factor for all operators in today's uncertain economy. "We provide insight into cost structures for a fleet, as well as cost management – in terms of distance travelled, when to replace vehicles, fuel consumption, and so on."

Production and Utilisation (or making sure that the vehicles are fully utilised) is pillar number four. "Ctrack software has a live productivity report which gives a real-time snapshot of what each vehicle is doing. Optimising utilisation assists with managing overtime, over-utilisation, maintenance and other fleet related costs," Jordt says.

The last pillar, operational control, is of utmost

importance to operators as it is so closely related to customer service.

"We've structured the pillars to allow us to grow with our customers and increase the efficiency of their business by bringing it full circle by starting at any one point," Jordt says.

Increasing customer efficiency is core to what Ctrack offers. In this regard it provides a number of solutions, two of which are fleet-monitoring services and business-consultancy services.

"We need to make sure operators maximise the benefits of their investments," says Hein Jordt, MD of Ctrack.



benefit, Business consultants could spend up to three months on site with a customer that subscribes to these services, which is followed by monthly maintenance to ensure optimal value is derived from their telematics solution. Detailed analysis is carried out in each area of the business process to identify and understand potential areas for improvement and recommend improved usage of the system," Jordt explains.

If needed, Ctrack also calls on specialist partners to assist with optimising the fleet, routing and scheduling, to enhance compliance to customer requirements.

"There is a great need for third-party integration to create a holistic view of the organisation, instead of a silo view of the telematics. Today, telematics plays a crucial role in validation," Jordt reiterates.

With such a need for flexibility and innovative solutions, how does Ctrack stay on top of it all?

"We have a 'blue sky team' that continually focuses on research and world trends, while interaction with customers provides an insight into their needs and how we can improve our current products," Jordt explains.

As it was more than 30 years ago, Ctrack's software was developed right here in South Africa, while the company's agility and global footprint have recently been enhanced by its US-based parent, Inseego Corp.

"Today, South Africa is still a pioneer in this industry. Our systems are so advanced because of the environment in which we had to operate, and the innovation this has required. In some instances, other countries are now encountering some

"Our fleet-monitoring service manages the five pillars on behalf of the customer from the Ctrack Support Centre. This allows operators to focus on their business and provide high levels of customer satisfaction.

"Ctrack business consultants help customers to ensure they maximize the use of Ctrack to their

of the economic risks and theft problems we've dealt with for a long time. Holistically, the biggest challenge in South Africa is that our communication infrastructure and costs thereof lag behind the rest of the globe," he concludes.

That does present a challenge, but it also means there's definitely more innovation to come... **F**





RTMS COMPLIANCE

has never been simpler

Altech Netstar's new Vigil Safety and Compliance (VSAC) system is making it easier for transport and logistics companies to comply with Road Transport Management System (RTMS) standards, as MARISKA MORRIS discovers

Morne Klingbiel, product manager of VSAC, and developer, Willie Holtzhauzen, worked together at a transport and logistics company where they managed the safety department. It was during long, frustrating hours spent with paperwork and filing systems that they thought of an automated system to assist with RTMS audits.

"Requesting evidence required by the auditor from numerous departments, as well as scanning through files to find documents, proved to be time consuming. Returning empty-handed due to careless filing practices is unacceptable. So, development started on a system whereby the entire process could be simplified to capture and store the documentation relevant for an RTMS audit," Klingbiel says.

The VSAC system aims to reduce the amount of paperwork as well as man-hours spent preparing documents for a RTMS audit.

"It started as a way to help companies manage this process with an electronic, automated system to reduce the paperwork. In the office environment, we are reducing the paperwork from around 200 000 copies to about 50 000 copies a year," Holtzhauzen notes.

Since development started in 2011, VSAC has

grown into a very agile system. As clients become familiar with the system, they request additions to meet their specific business needs. Holtzhauzen notes: "It has grown beyond RTMS; it is actually a total fleet-management solution, which provides financial control of the entire logistics value chain."

VSAC uses an automated document-control system to scan documents and allocate or store them in a designated location with the use of a unique barcode on the cover page, or pages, of the document.

When used correctly, it offers a wide range of services from listing the duration of various contacts and creating diesel orders, to invoicing directly from the system and providing accurate calculations relating to the driver and fuel consumption. The financial and diesel management modules are critical tools for driving cost management and profitability.

It was not easy to create VSAC. A big challenge for the developers was to find a simple way to link the scanned documents to a specific driver, vehicle or load. Holtzhauzen says: "The biggest challenge was to make it easy to scan a document and have the system do the thinking."

While the system makes it easy to access these documents, it is important to keep updating the information on the system. Training is also essential,



"The auditors no longer consider only a company's compliance with safety. They also look at how the company manages vehicle maintenance, for example," says Holtzhauzen. An added bonus of the VSAC system is that it is also available to non-Netstar clients.

"The system can be easily used and integrated with any telematics solution, provided the client's service provider is willing to give us the required information," Klingbiel comments. However, this might cause a delay.

A telematics solution from another company might not allow information to be sent on a per-second interval. There can be a delay from half an hour to half a day. So, while it is not required for a company to use a Netstar fleet-management or tracking device, Holtzhauzen notes that it will make the process more seamless. VSAC can be used by small, medium or large transport companies.

"The system caters to any size or type of fleet including heavy vehicles, short-haul delivery vehicles, buses, courier vehicles, earth moving, plant and mining vehicles," Klingbiel points out. VSAC is already available on the market, and can also easily be adapted to foreign legislation so that it can be used outside South Africa.

"The system can be accessed through a desktop version, which is installed on site. Alternatively, a web-based version is available enabling users to access the software from an internet-enabled device. By making the necessary changes, for example to speed limits, and or permissible loading masses, the system can be tailored to suit any country's legislation," Klingbiel says.

The team is excited about the VSAC system, which it believes will make RTMS compliance

so much easier. Klingbiel notes that the initial RTMS accreditation is easy as only three months of data is needed. The challenge is renewing and maintaining the accreditation.

"That is where the difficult part comes in, as the data has to be maintained for a 12-month period," he comments. The duo is also sure that the system will assist in saving lives.

"The object is to promote best practice in self-regulation, thereby ultimately preventing overloads, ensuring adequate vehicle maintenance, driver wellness and compliance with regulations. It is essentially promoting and improving road safety for all users," Klingbiel concludes. **F**



ABOVE: Willie Holtzhauzen (left) and Morne Klingbiel explain that the Altech Netstar Vigil Safety and Compliance system is an important tool in RTMS auditing.

and is provided by Netstar to its clients.

Klingbiel explains: "A full installation process is completed by an experienced team. Training of the users then takes place at the client's premises using the employee, vehicle, load and diesel documentation."

The system is unique to the market. While various features are offered by other companies, the Netstar system provides a range of features through one system.

"We are yet to come across a system that offers the numerous module functionalities offered by VSAC," notes Klingbiel. This multi-module functionality has become important in RTMS auditing.



THE ERA OF AUCTION

As South Africa struggles to survive rating-agency downgrades and a second recession in eight years, buying on auction may become a fleet owner's default choice. ANLERIE DE WET looks at the auction industry and what first-time buyers and sellers need to know

Fanie Bielderman, senior executive of Aucor, says the South African auction market is bound to grow in popularity over traditional retail sales platforms, against a backdrop of the country's negative economic outlook.

"While there will be a lag effect in the impact of the country's downgraded status by international rating agencies, South Africans can expect the maturing auction sector to expand as a sales platform option," says Bielderman.

"We are seeing a surge in the number of people attending vehicle auctions – a trend which we predict will translate into greater numbers of qualified and cash buyers at auctions."

"The South African auction industry has proved to be robust during economic booms and downturns. This is because corporate asset disposals are initiated for a variety of reasons, including when they become redundant, or there are surplus assets," says Bielderman.

"In such cases, the role of experienced auctioneers is pivotal to realising greater value for corporate assets

through a simple, transparent and auditable process," he adds.

Although the auction industry has much to offer vehicle buyers and sellers, Bielderman warns them to do their homework to ensure that the auctioneers are registered and credible.

"Buying or selling at an auction through a credible auctioneer is a high-value/low-risk proposition. It is, therefore, important to find out whether the auctioneer is compliant with the Consumer Protection Act and affiliated to professional bodies. The goods on auction should also be easily viewable at proper brick-and-mortar facilities," explains Bielderman.

Although one should be careful to use a legitimate vehicle auctioning company, there can be benefits for both buyers and sellers who use this method.

Everhard Ferreira, assistant marketing manager at NUco Auctioneers, recommends that truck and commercial-vehicle owners sell their vehicles through auctions, because, more often than not, the client is the end user.

"As the end user, the client is normally willing to pay a decent price to acquire a specific product. The



Trucks and commercial vehicles are usually bought for significantly less than market-related prices.

reason for this is that sometimes products that suit the specific needs of the client may be difficult to find," says Ferreira.

"Sellers should always stay in the loop, in terms of where the demand is and what market forecasts look like, in order to make sound decisions on what products to sell and when. They should also provide the auctioneer with as much information as possible about the product and make sure that the necessary paperwork is in order."

Shannon Winterstein, co-founder of WH Auctioneers, says sellers should understand that not all auctioneers are the same. "Sellers should work with an auctioneer who understands their particular asset and can guide them professionally to get the best result and fulfil their expectations," she says.

"Sellers should understand the market and be realistic in terms of pricing their products. Lastly,

auctions aren't a venue to dump damaged and broken assets. There can be a come-back should the item have undisclosed problems that a seller knows about."

Winterstein warns that an auctioneer who doesn't understand a commodity may not have a database or marketing schedule that draws in the right buyers. "We suggest that the seller finds out about the auctioneer's experience in the type of assets that they want to sell and talks to buyers and sellers who have used their service," she says.

Ferreira says prospective vehicle owners who want to buy on auction should know that trucks and commercial vehicles are usually bought for significantly less than market-related prices.

Auctions can offer a quick, easy and convenient platform for buyers. "They get to decide beforehand what an asset is worth and bid up to that amount. It is also a safe system where buyers are guaranteed that the paperwork will be in order," says Winterstein.

"Before going to the auction, buyers should gain as much knowledge as they can about the product that they are interested in buying. They should also attend the viewing day and ask relevant questions about the product," explains Ferreira.

"If need be, they should bring their own mechanic to inspect and start the truck in order to make a sound decision on the potential purchase. Buyers should carefully read through all the terms and conditions during registration before each auction and have all the necessary documents at hand," adds Ferreira.

To register as a bidder at an auction, a deposit is payable before, or on the day of, the auction. This deposit is refundable if no items are purchased during the auction.

Winterstein says every auctioneer has different cost schedules and that they usually rely on a combination of a seller's commission or a buyer's premium – which is usually ten percent – and that paper fees may also be involved.

He adds: "When selecting an auctioneer, don't just think about the commission charged, but rather what service you will be getting. Marketing databases are imperative as the more buyers there are at an auction the better."

Ferreira says: "When it comes to the cost of buying on auction, it is important to allow for VAT, which is charged on the sale amount at the end of each auction. This applies to all items sold, unless it is specifically stated that there is no VAT payable on a particular item," stresses Ferreira.

The key to buying and selling on auction is to be prepared. If buyers are willing to go the extra mile to save money during a difficult economy, then the South African auction industry may just skyrocket past the online sphere. **F**

TRUCKS NOW FOR SALE

on the **FOCUS** website

FOCUS has partnered with *Carfind.co.za* in order to sell new and used trucks and trailers via the **FOCUS** website, and both teams are thrilled at the prospects for this new collaboration

The **FOCUS** website has a new addition – the Truck and Trailer Showroom, which offers readers the opportunity to view various trucks and trailers that are for sale. There are currently more than 50 new and used vehicles and trailers listed.

“Our readers collectively purchase thousands of trucks and trailers each year. We believe that this will make the purchasing process quick, easy and convenient for them,” says Charleen Clarke, editor of **FOCUS** magazine.

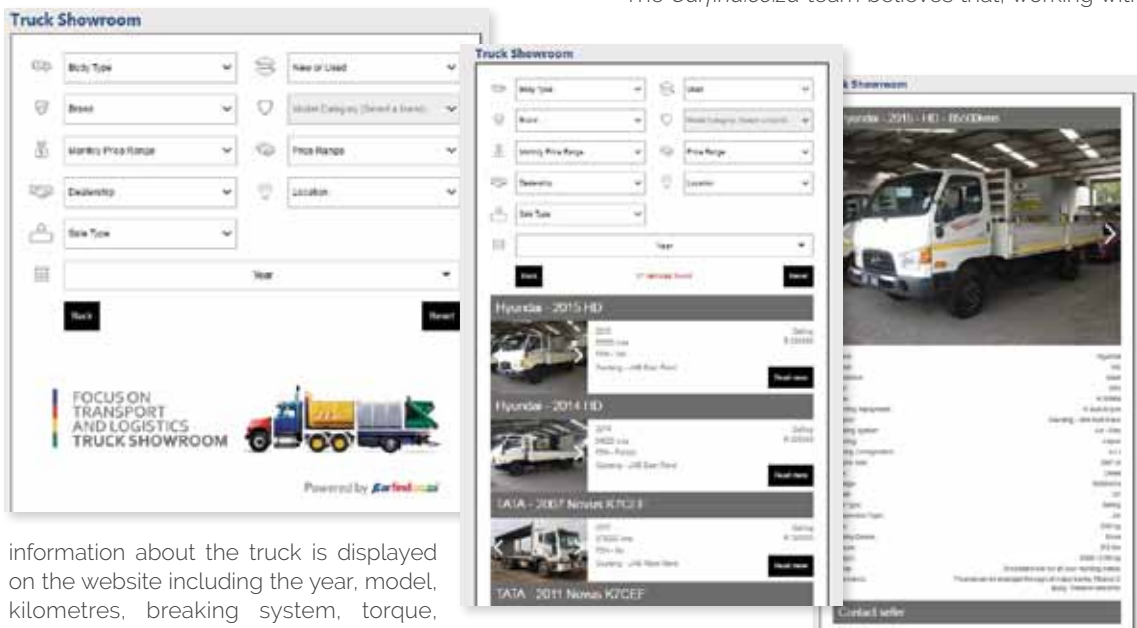
Vehicles can be filtered according to type, brand, price, dealership and location. All relevant

In the past, the company focused only on new- and used-car sales. McDouall notes: “With our association with **FOCUS**, we want to establish *Carfind.co.za* as the go-to place for trading in new and used trucks and trailers.”

McDouall is considered the top online vehicle-trading authority in sub-Saharan Africa. When *Carfind.co.za* was conceptualised in 2000, it was a ground-breaking service within the motor industry.

Since then, McDouall has continued to reshape the industry. *Carfind.co.za* recently launched its online 360° interior view and now, in partnership with **FOCUS**, offers the Truck and Trailer Showroom.

“The *Carfind.co.za* team believes that, working with



information about the truck is displayed on the website including the year, model, kilometres, breaking system, torque, weight and monthly repayment.

“The showroom has a very simple design, which makes searching for a truck easy,” Clarke comments.

“The two companies have very different – but complementary – areas of expertise. *Carfind.co.za* has been a pioneer in the field of online vehicle trading for 17 years. **FOCUS**, on the other hand, is the most highly respected commercial vehicle magazine in South Africa and has been a leader in this industry for over three decades,” says Frank McDouall, co-founder of *Carfind.co.za*.

This partnership has also allowed *Carfind.co.za* to expand its service offering to commercial vehicles.

FOCUS, we can make a real difference in truck and trailer purchases. It’s never been easier to buy a truck or trailer. We believe the product we offer is unique and superior to other products currently available in the market. Our partnership with **FOCUS** will also help drive awareness of *Carfind.co.za* and its entry into this sector of the market,” McDouall comments.

“The **FOCUS** team is excited about offering this new service to our readers, and we are thrilled to be teaming up with such innovators in the online vehicle-sales industry. You can now get your vehicle and news all in one place,” Clarke concludes. **F**



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Supporting **COST EFFICIENCY**

What do you get when you combine an efficient vehicle, trained drivers and staff, and a portfolio of solutions for all things cost-related? MAN Automotive SA has the answer

Total cost of ownership (TCO) is the key term in cost accounting for those wanting to assert and boost their position in the market amid growing competition.

The purchase price and fuel consumption remain the obvious main factors when it comes to the use of a commercial vehicle. However, by considering the direct and indirect follow-up costs in a careful and consolidated manner, allows for a solid long-term forecast to keep the overall balance positive in the future.

"When it comes to transparency of overall truck operating costs, MAN's approach is to provide reliability, information and service," says Dave van Graan, head of special sales projects at MAN Automotive SA.

"The perfect balancing of vehicle, driver and services, combined and connected within an integrated approach, contributes significantly to a company's efficiency and success," says Van Graan.

THE MOST EFFICIENT VEHICLE

Every transport company's work is based and centred on its fleet of vehicles. One of MAN's own vehicle

solutions is EfficientLine 2, a proven efficiency champion made up of the TGS range of vehicles, aptly demonstrated by the performance of the TGS 26.480 6x4 BLS LX Cab in the 2017 Truck Test.

To enhance results, it is important that the correct vehicle selection must be made for local and application-specific operating conditions.

"While Western Europe has embarked on the latest rendition of Euro-6 engine technology, with EfficientLine 3 attributes, South African operators still prefer the Euro-2 and Euro-3 emission standard of engine technology with the EfficientLine 2 enhancement package due to the differences in their local requirements.

"We aim at optimisation of vehicle operating efficiency, which results in payload productivity factor improvement, as well as vastly reduced fuel consumption. These values were proved in the recent Truck Test where our TGS 26.480 delivered exceptional results," Van Graan rejoices.

This is aided by consistent optimisation of the entire driveline and the latest evolution of the enhanced, more durable and fuel-efficient MAN D26 engines, which provide increased torque, higher performance and dependable reliability.



THE TRAINED DRIVER

All drivers will need the chance to get acquainted with the innovative technology in their vehicles, to familiarise themselves with it and learn how best to use it. This is achieved through ProfiDrive, MAN's trademark brand for professional driver training products to MAN customers globally.

ProfiDrive brings together 35 years of international experience and more than 120 internationally certified trainers across 67 countries. ProfiDrive training methods were originally adopted in South Africa in 2013, with official certification and launch in late 2015," explains Dean Temlett, MAN support and projects manager.

"We look for every opportunity to enable drivers to thoroughly exploit the existing features on the vehicle, combined with sound driving techniques and principals that maximise both economy and safety. By doing this we take existing professional drivers to the next level," Temlett says.

The most popular ProfiDrive training course is the three-day Intensive Programme, geared towards senior drivers and driver trainers. Since inception, participants have achieved an average improvement in fuel consumption and productivity of ten and 20 percent respectively.

"Most of these participants come to this course with a lot of experience. They are at the top of their game and think they already know all there is to know about vehicle performance – so when we present these figures, they are generally blown away by the improvements. Now imagine what could be achieved by drivers who are not yet at that level," Temlett exclaims.



Since inception, participants have achieved an average improvement in fuel consumption and productivity of ten and 20 percent respectively.

The techniques adopted at ProfiDrive target the best speed and turnaround time, so that the optimal productivity can be achieved first. Thereafter, customers can decide internally to negotiate trade-offs in their operation.

TOP-CLASS SERVICE

A wide range of services on offer complete the support for the total cost accounting, starting with MAN TeleMatics – the smart fleet-management system operators can use to keep a constant eye on their fleet. All the functions including vehicle information, trip planning, and even the archiving of data from the digital tachographs, are combined in MAN TeleMatics.

MAN ServiceCare is one of the most popular extensions to the basic telematics system offered by MAN.

MAN Automotive also offers products in the areas of finance through MAN Financial Services, approved used vehicles with MAN TopUsed, MAN Service (repair and maintenance contract options) and, in the event of a breakdown, Mobile24 – the MAN breakdown service for trucks and buses, which ensures that MAN customers are not left to fend for themselves. **F**

Not a SMALL SPILL

A hazchem spill can lead to very severe environmental damage, which can bankrupt a transport company. MARISKA MORRIS investigates ways to minimise harm if a spill does occur

Safety planning requires taking a worst-case scenario into account. In May 2015, in Limpopo province, a truck overturned and spilled 28 000 litres of sulphuric acid into the Nyl River. The pollution caused fish to die, farmers halted irrigation and were forced to move their livestock, while residents living ten kilometres downstream were warned not to use the water.

"Waste such as milk, run-off water containing food waste, oil and fuel can be serious enough to cause damage," says Morné Stoltz, head of business insurance and broker distribution at MiWay.

“

SANS 1186 stipulates that transporters working with a hazmat product must ensure that every proactive measure is taken to prevent a spill.

Companies can be held liable for spills resulting from employee negligence. "Even if the pollution is caused by contractors; a company can still be held liable," notes Stoltz. The most obvious safety precaution is to ensure the company has environmental insurance, especially when transporting hazardous materials.

"This form of insurance covers the costs incurred through clean-up and rehabilitation in the event of an environmental incident," Stoltz points out. Not having insurance can result in the financial demise of a

company, due to the high cost of clean-up operations or legal fees.

Another preventative measure companies should consider is investing in a spill kit. "The South African National Standard (SANS) 1186 stipulates that transporters working with a hazmat product must ensure that every proactive measure is taken to prevent a spill. In the event of a spill occurring, a company needs to ensure the proper management of the spill," says Salika Singh, sales and marketing consultant at AfriSupply.

With a spill kit, the truck driver is able to contain the spilled material. "Having a spill kit on hand enables the drivers to quickly respond to de-risking and blocking off hazmat spillages to prevent them entering storm-water drains or rivers. This greatly reduces the risk, cost and impact on both the environment and the public," Singh notes.

These kits cannot, however, be used for the actual clean-up of the spill, as most trucks carry tonnes of hazmat materials. There are various spill kits available for different materials ranging from oils and fuels, bodily fluids and biological waste, to mercury and glass shards.

Kits come in various sizes and contain a variety of equipment, including the correct absorbents for the specific material. Truck or tanker spill kits from AfriSupply range in size from 25 to 75 litres. The smaller kits are compact and can be kept inside the cab with the driver.

Other larger spill kits – such as the 240-litre Universal Wheelie Bin Spill Kit, which comes with a bin and broom – are more suited to factories or warehouses. It is also possible to buy refills for the spill kits.

Insurance and a good spill kit will not prevent a spill, but they can contain the cost to the company as well as to the environment. **F**

Old dog,

NEW TRICKS

AFTERMARKET



ANLERIE DE WET chats to Treveshan Chetty, owner of Autotec Vehicle Technology Solutions, to find out how vehicle owners can give their old vehicles a new feel by installing new automotive technologies

“There is a need in the industry to adapt to individual vehicle owner’s needs. Autotec has, therefore, developed a range of innovative solutions that seamlessly provide lifestyle-related products and services ranging from safety and vehicle-care products to advanced electronic solutions,” says Chetty.

Autotec provides products such as fleet-management systems, drive cameras, fuel-monitoring systems and ICAM tracking systems. “A good fleet-management system is an essential tool for any logistics company. To have full control of the trucks’ whereabouts, fuel and drivers will definitely make a business more effective and profitable,” says Chetty.

“When a vehicle is being monitored, it leaves much less room for problems such as negligent driving and non-work-related use of the vehicle by drivers.”

Chetty notes: “Drive cameras monitor the vehicle in real time and provide camera footage of the road in front of the vehicle. This enables owners or operators to check whether their vehicles are stuck in traffic, or, more importantly, should the vehicle be involved in an accident, the recorded footage can be used for insurance purposes.

“A fuel-monitoring system can monitor the fuel consumption and cost per kilometre, which helps with costing and can eliminate fuel theft.”



Full control of the trucks’ whereabouts, fuel and drivers will make a business more effective and profitable.

The ICAM Tracking System, for example is an all-in-one solution that includes all the aforementioned features.

Autotec fits products to more than 1 000 vehicles per year at its centre in Edenvale. “We also manage and service multiple sales desks in dealer showrooms across the country, and offer a range of customised vehicle accessories through our application centre, thereby providing a seamless one-stop service to our dealers and their customers,” says Chetty.

“Often, when purchasing a new vehicle, you will find that the advertised price sounds great, but after adding the optional extras it increases quite substantially,” concludes Chetty.

With this in mind, it may very well be a cheaper option to install the new technologies into your old vehicle, rather than buying a new one – provided that a warranty is issued for the new technology. The only sad part is that this doesn’t ensure a longer life for your vehicle ... yet. Here’s hoping! **F**



A value WORKHORSE

GAVIN MYERS drives the JMC Boarding 4x2 SC LX Euro 4; a value-for-money single-cab bakkie that just might be worth considering

Having entered the local market in 2009, JMC – for Jiangling Motors Corporation – has made steady progress as one of the four Chinese light and medium commercial-vehicle suppliers that have managed to stick it out and get a foothold in the South African market.

The Boarding has been one of the company's mainstay models over the years, and has recently come in for a bit of a refresh that includes a revised façade and Euro-4 powertrain. Granted, the overall

measuring 2 290 (l) x 1 600 (w) x 380 (h) mm. It has a gross vehicle mass of 2 487 kg and a 1 497 kg tare mass, which endow it with a payload of 990 kg.

In LX spec, the Boarding offers electric windows; fog lamps and adjustable headlamps; a double-din sound system that includes CD, auxiliary and USB input; air-conditioning; key-operated central locking; and faux leather seats. Safety features include optional anti-lock brakes and electronic brakeforce distribution.

As with the exterior, the interior design is fairly generic, though JMC has spiced it up with silver accents and red-mesh door and centre armrest upholstery. The cab interior is slightly on the tight side, with not much rearward seat adjustment or stowage space.

Likewise, the door pockets are thin and difficult to access past the wide seats. With the exception of the air vents and centre cubby lid, which feel loose and flimsy, the quality of material, fit and finish is acceptable.

Any other niggles? Well, the motor is rather agricultural and the front suspension can lose composure if hitting a bump mid corner. However, these are issues that one can get used to with time.

JMC is currently offering a R10 000 cash-back deal on the Boarding 4x2 SC LX Euro 4, the base price of which is R194 880 (a Euro-2 version is available for R20 000 less). This includes a three-year/100 000 km warranty and roadside assistance. It competes against the likes of the petrol-only Fiat Fullback Single Cab at R240 900, the Foton Tunland Single Cab Workhorse at R209 995 and the GWM Steed 5 2.0 WGT Workhorse at R179 900.

As a value-based single-cab workhorse, the JMC offers a decent mix of carrying capability and standard spec, at a reasonable price. **F**



styling is on the generic side, though the five-spoke alloys and front end – with its bold double-slat silver grille highlighting the large JMC logo – look good.

A single-cab bakkie is, however, not made to look good, it's made to work ... so what about that? Well, powering the Boarding is a 2,8-litre turbodiesel engine that produces 88 kW at 3 600 r/min and 245 Nm at 2 000 r/min.

The engine doesn't rev high (it runs out of puff at the power peak), but it doesn't need to; the torque is on tap from the start and shoves the Boarding along in a linear fashion whether laden or not. Drive is through a five-speed close-ratio gearbox that keeps the engine in the torque band at all times.

With a length of five metres and a three-metre wheelbase, the Boarding SC has a load bed

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CHARMONT
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Driving the FASTEST TRUCK in the world!

FABIEN CALVET, from French magazine *France Routes*, had the exclusive privilege of taking control of the Iron Knight – which recently set two new world speed records

In my life I've had the chance to drive a lot of beautiful machines ... including all types and styles of trucks – some crazier than others. These include European champion racing trucks and Dakar monsters, but this challenge provided yet another dimension in terms of power and speed. With this truck, I moved the craziness up another notch.

It all started with my friend, Boije Ovebrink (yes Ovebrink is a friend in the true sense of the word; we have known each other for 30 years), who had already given me the immense privilege of letting me drive "Mean Green" – his green firecracker of a hybrid truck, with which he had already beaten a speed record back in 2011.

At that time, *France Routes* was already on the move, and I must admit I experienced huge pleasure in the drive. When Ovebrink offered to let me take control of his new baby, I was frankly overjoyed. What a mark of confidence! This time, though, it required the backing of the parent company, as the Iron Knight is a 100-percent Volvo project.

At first glance, it is easy to see that it is, indeed, a factory concept. The design department added its touch and, let's face it, the truck is just splendid. The quality of finish is impeccable with ultra-light materials, such as carbon for the cab, a Lexan windshield and competition accessories worthy of Formula 1 ... in short everything has been thought through and the result is perfect. On the scales the truck weighs only 4 500 kg with a distribution of 55 percent on the front axle.

Yet, I must confess (and it must remain between us) that nothing could have given me more pleasure

than to take the wheel of such a monster. Imagine, 1 789 kW (2 400 hp) and torque of 6 000 Nm under your right foot!

During the age of super trucks, in 2001, when I was champion of France, we had about 1 500 horses under the hood, and even then the trucks were power monsters. So today, with 2 400 horses, I was apprehensive.

In addition to my friend Ovebrink, there were two engineers, who had come from the parent company specially to explain all the details of how to operate the machine.

Robin Karlsson is responsible for engine development and gave me an overview on the optimal engine speed, while explaining the specifics of the turbos... Imagine, the D13 is equipped with four Garret competition turbos with the pressure set close to 6.5 bar! Yes, you read correctly!

On the intercooler side, the technicians have turned to an air/water system, which offers the best performance. In short, the engine encompasses all the development skills of a big company: Volvo.

Even more incredible was when Johan Fries, the gearbox specialist, briefed me on its functioning. Hang on – the box is standard! Yes, the same as on a lot of series trucks. When he first told me this, I thought he was joking...

The gearbox is actually a standard I-Shift dual clutch, just equipped with the reinforced clutch plates used in racing. It is crazy, but it proves the resilience of today's gearboxes; this one is able to handle over 2 000 hp and 6 000 Nm torque.

Pictures: A. & W. Bartscher

RIGHT AND BELOW: The Iron Knight is an in-house Volvo development. It will reach 200 km/h in under ten seconds and only stop at 290 km/h!



I wasn't about to be clever at the briefing ... I listened and recorded everything said to me, because the truck is a monster of technology.

For this test in real conditions, the *Automobile Club de l'Ouest* (ACO, or Automobile Club of the West, which is the largest automotive group in France, and is most famous for being the organising entity behind the annual Le Mans 24-hour race) kindly lent us the Le Mans track to use as a playground.

Once at the wheel and well strapped in, Ovebrink threw a curve ball at me and asked me to memorise all the buttons in the cab. Fries accompanied me as passenger, so that he could answer any questions I might have had.

Starting up was really simple. Unlike the previous Mean Green record-setting truck, the Iron Knight has no hybrid systems. Operation is absolutely normal, as on an everyday truck. Once the gear had been selected, I simply pushed the gas pedal to drive the truck. Neither more nor less, like all the Volvos of today.

When we entered the track, I immediately felt the potential of the truck. For the first laps of the track we went slowly, because the photographer's car was not far away and, frankly, an Audi S6 under the truck would have been bad. Attention and, importantly, precision were required; this is in no way a racing truck...

The Iron Knight is a truck made to set speed records and, especially, to prove the technological know-how of the brand. Moreover, it is, indeed, a truck intended for the straight-line speed record.

The true potential of the Iron Knight is pure acceleration. At first, I must admit to being a little shy with the accelerator pedal, but once the truck was at the right temperature, Fries beckoned me to put it all in.

The engine went up in the rev band and I took a real kick in the ass! Imagine, 2 400 hp! The acceleration was demonic; the speed increased steadily and the turbo boost was phenomenal. Initially, I even thought I was hallucinating. With six bars of turbo pressure showing on the boost gauge, I was glued to the seat.

At 180 km/h the tyres continued to spin slightly under the force of the phenomenal acceleration. At more than 220 km/h I urgently released the gas, because the first turns had arrived. The increase in speed was so rapid that it was difficult to grasp the extent of the distance we had travelled.

It's no wonder that when Ovebrink shattered the speed records, the truck required an aeroplane runway. With him at the wheel, this baby hung on to 290 km/h without any problem!

To reach such speeds the truck is equipped with a Meritor diff especially manufactured with a ratio of 2:47:1. Despite these high speeds, handling remained exemplary and the steering was precise.

At the front, Goodyear equipped the truck with the same tyres as those fitted to the racing truck. In contrast, at the rear, the tyre company developed a super-single tyre of size 495/45 R22.5 to ensure maximum stability – and it worked.

During this test, everything went so fast, I was really amazed! Imagine; it took less than ten seconds to go from 0 to 200 km/h! It was just great and I must admit that, until then, I had never driven a truck so fast, and especially a truck that provides so many sensations. Frankly, it provided a huge dose of fun in a very short time.

The feeling of having an unusual machine in one's hands; a truck combining all the superlatives; a truck that many would dream of driving one day... Me, I had the chance to do it and, frankly, I could never thank my friend Ovebrink enough for the opportunity. The gift he gave me is just incredible, so I had to share it with you. **F**

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





FUEL AND CASH: BIG CHALLENGES IN INDIA

Transport and logistics companies in India are battling delays caused by long queues at petrol stations, the cancellation of various bank notes and a push towards e-commerce. MARISKA MORRIS reports

In India, long queues at petrol stations have become a common phenomenon. Around 350-million people are estimated to visit fuel stations every day. Fuel consumption increased by 10.7 percent to 196-million tonnes in 2016, and this number is estimated to grow by 6.3 percent in 2017, which means 4.4-million barrels of fuel will be consumed daily.

In an attempt to reduce these queues, the government is considering home deliveries. If this initiative is implemented, India will be the first country to have a home delivery system for fuel. Consumers will book fuel online, which will be delivered to their homes by the oil companies. While a similar system is under trial in the United States, it has not yet been legalised.

There have, however, been concerns about safety. For example, dispensing fuel requires a nine-metre safe zone, where mobile phones are not allowed. Home deliveries would make it difficult for companies to abide by these safety regulations. The oil industry has also shown concern about the proper enforcement to ensure the service is delivered by accredited companies.

It is unclear whether fuel will be delivered to businesses. This initiative would, however, shorten the delivery time in the country's transport and logistics sector. The transport sector is the largest consumer of fuel in India.

Business World quotes joint secretary of the Ministry of Road Transport, Abhay Damle, who states that trucks and buses make up 2.5 percent of vehicles on India's roads, but consume 65 percent of the fuel utilised in the country. Up to 25 000 rupees (R4 925) is spent by truck drivers on fuel for long-distance trips.

Yet, while the wait for fuel might be shorter, trucks on India's roads are facing other delays caused by a shift to e-commerce and demonetisation – the cancellation of various bank notes.

Late last year, India scrapped the 500- and 1 000-rupee notes in the hope of limiting tax dodgers and counterfeiters. Shortly after the announcement, various businesses, such as petrol stations, refused to accept these notes, which left many trucks stranded. A reported 90 percent of the three-million trucks on India's highways were stuck for up to two days.

An estimated 80 percent of the trucking industry is dependent on cash for various transactions.



RIGHT AND BELOW: The transport sector is the largest fuel consumer in India.



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An estimated 80 percent of the trucking industry is dependent on cash for various transactions.

"Only 30 percent of the transporters pay by cheque at diesel outlets, while others have to pay in cash," says Ramesh Agarwal, chairman of Agarwal Packers and Movers, as quoted by *The Economic Times*. This is not unique to the transport and logistics industry.

PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates that India is one of the most cash-reliant economies in the world with 98 percent of all transactions (68 percent by value) done in cash.

The United Kingdom logistics publication, *The Loadstar*, quotes Janesh Gulati, CEO of Boxco World Logistics: "The logistics industry in India is dependent on daily cash, as most of the drivers don't have credit or debit cards, nor do villages through which they traverse have banking facilities."

Despite this dependency, there is a large push towards e-commerce. This is especially true for the fuel industry. Oil companies are offering 0.75-percent discount on cashless transactions. Over 72 000 e-wallets have been activated to assist in paying for fuel.

Daily cashless transactions have increased from 150 rupees (R19,71) per day in 2016, to 400 rupees (R78,83) per day. *The Times of India* quotes Ravi Shinde, president of the Petrol Dealer's Association: "We are surprised by the sudden increase in cashless transactions at the pumps. It

shows that demonetisation has prompted citizens to make maximum use of credit or debit cards for payments."

According to the association, in 2016, around 650 to 700 customers preferred cashless payments at fuel pumps. This number has increased to 2 400 customers. Annual transactions at fuel stations are worth up to 25-billion rupees (R4,9 billion).

The government is eager to improve fuel efficiency in the transport and logistics industry, especially as it is set to grow. Truck sales are estimated to increase by 8.9 percent from 80 million in 2012/13 to 2.2 billion in 2024/25.

To improve fuel efficiency and reduce pollution caused by the transport industry, the government has introduced the Roll-On Roll-Off (Ro-Ro) initiative. In March, 30 loaded trucks were transported 85 km on an electrified goods train from Garhi Harsaru station in Gurugram to Muradnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

The Ro-Ro system is also expected to reduce emissions and save money for logistics companies. *The Daily News and Analysis* notes that truck operators can save on toll taxes, fuel as well as the Environment Compensation Charge, which ranges from 1 400 to 2 600 rupees (R275 to R512).

Although the initiative is still being tested, it might offer the trucking industry in India a solution to the fuel and cash-flow challenges it currently faces. **F**

GLOBAL FOCUS NEWS

IVECO SCOOPS MINIBUS OF THE YEAR AWARD

Following the Magelys winning the International coach of the Year 2016 award, Iveco's Daily Tourys has been crowned International Minibus of the Year 2017, by the Bus, Coach and Minibus of the Year international jury of major journalists representing 18 leading European road-transport magazines.



This is the 15th award bestowed on the Iveco Daily range of vehicles since 2015.

Following the three-day evaluation, the jury judged the Daily Tourys to have performed very well against its six competitors. In this inaugural competition, the

vehicles were evaluated in real road conditions with uphill and downhill sections, motorways, narrow roads and a variety of situations.

"The Iveco Daily Tourys combined high-quality bodywork, together with premium comfort for the passenger. The driveline, with a strong Euro-6 diesel engine and the best gearbox ever made in this class, makes the trip an experience to remember," says Tom Terjesen, president of the Bus and Coach of the Year jury.

"The large luggage capacity is aided by the great idea of a flap inside the luggage compartment to give even more space if needed."

"The fact that this is a complete factory-built minibus means that maintenance and service will be more efficient anywhere in Europe," he adds.





MAN STEYR HITS 200 000

MAN recently celebrated a proud anniversary at its site in Steyr, Austria: since the first TGL/TGM-series pre-production vehicles rolled off the line in late 2004, 200 000 vehicles have been produced and series production got fully underway for all series models in 2006.

"We are particularly proud that our customers have placed their trust in the superior quality of our products, and especially the TGL/TGM series, for over a decade. For us, this enormous number is both proof of, and, above all, the motivation for our work," explains Thomas Müller, production manager at MAN Truck & Bus Austria, Steyr plant.

The customer and future operator of this anniversary vehicle is the Austrian brewery company,

Stiegl, which has enjoyed a longstanding partnership with MAN. Thomas Gerbl, managing director of Stiegl, stressed that the superior quality and reliability of MAN's products is a key element of the partnership.

Stiegl is also a partner of the Council for Sustainable Logistics (CNL), which in autumn will receive nine TGM trucks with electric drive for field trials.

Since mid-2015, the Steyr plant has been expanded to incorporate new competencies in the fields of special vehicle construction, plastic-part paintwork and electromobility.





ARE YOU READY FOR THE 850 KW, 5 000 NM HYBRID?

Finnish companies Visedo and Sisu Auto have teamed up to develop a hybrid electric parallel-power system for the heavy-truck market, which is capable of delivering 850 kW (1 140 hp) and more than 5 000 Nm torque.

Visedo, Finnish manufacturer of heavy-duty hybrid and electric power systems, developed the electric-power system for a proof-of-concept vehicle that integrates the parallel hybrid drive (meaning the electric motor is sandwiched between the engine and gearbox) that sends power from both an electric motor and a diesel engine to the same axle.

This means there is no need to alter the vehicle's existing chassis or suspension structure. The system was developed to work with the Mercedes-Benz OM471 and OM473 diesel engines, which are used in the Sisu Polar truck range.

"We're proud to be giving Europe its first look at such a breakthrough hybrid-truck drive system that's capable of delivering breakthrough power and performance, while saving fuel and reducing emissions," says Visedo system solutions manager Risto Tiainen.

"The revolution to electrify the world's diesel-



FUSO GOES GLOBAL TO TOP JAPAN

The latest-generation Fuso flagship, the above 15-t Super Great, has been launched to the Japanese market – and the company is not hiding its ambition for greatness.

“With this new vehicle we position ourselves at the top of our market in Japan. The new Fuso Super Great is a completely new development and uses state-of-the-art technologies from our global Daimler Trucks platforms. We will offer our customers the most efficient, safest and best-connected truck they can get in the Japanese market,” says Marc Llistosella, president and CEO of Fuso and head of Daimler Trucks Asia.

The Fuso Super Great uses Daimler Trucks’ global platform strategy, with engines, transmissions and axles supplied from the German Mercedes-Benz plants in Mannheim, Gaggenau and Kassel, as well as the plant of the United States (US)-powertrain subsidiary Detroit in Redford, Michigan.

A number of new technologies result in fuel consumption being reduced by up to 15 percent compared to the previous model. The 10,7-litre engine fully

complies with the Japanese emission standards JP17 and has been optimised with regard to consumption, emission efficiency and payload, compared to its preceding powertrain.

The 12-speed ShiftPilot automated manual transmission (AMT) is produced at the Gaggenau plant, and differentials are produced in the Mercedes-Benz plant in Kassel, as well as the Detroit facility. Axles, however, are locally manufactured and installed at the Japanese plant in Kawasaki.

The new Super Great features state-of-the-art safety and assistance systems for the first time in the Japanese market. These include: Active Brake Assist 4 emergency braking system, Active Attention Assist fatigue alert system and the turning assistant Active Sideguard Assist.

Truckconnect telematics is available as standard in all models and enables the customer to make real-time requests for all crucial truck data. This can be accessed from the cab by a digital dashboard and the Truck Centre Control touch screen.

powered transport is already underway. After delivering pioneering hybrid and electric power for passenger buses, Visedo is proud to be powering the next generation of cleaner-truck transport solutions.”

The system enables the use of the vehicle with or without electric power, while Visedo’s component flexibility enables customer and system-specific integration and customisation.

The driver’s input is minimal, with the system supplying additional power and charging automatically. The driver can, however, keep track of the system’s data and, if required, bypass the automated system to take control.



HINO HINTS AT NEW 500

Speaking at a media briefing at the recent Nampo agricultural show, vice president of Hino SA, Ernie Trautmann, revealed that pre-production build of the new 500-Series truck is already under way at the Hino SA manufacturing facility in Prospecton, Durban.

"This is taking place earlier than usual as several new build processes are required. Technical teams from Hino factories in Japan and Thailand are assisting in the setting up of the assembly requirements for the new truck, which has been in development for the past five years," he said.

Shegeki Hagiwara, the Hino chief engineer for medium-duty trucks, was in South Africa with senior members of his product-development team to meet customers and dealers while overseeing the pre-production build of the new truck range.

Hino's new heavyweight contender will launch locally in the last quarter of the year and, while details of are still scarce, Trautmann did say that it will be available with a new fully automatic transmission.

"There is a significant swing by the operators of trucks in South Africa towards alternative transmissions instead of a manual gearbox," Trautmann said. "The new range will also provide a 6x4 model, which we have not had before," he added.

"The launch of the new Hino 500-Series will be the first opportunity for us to offer our range of service and full-maintenance plans, as well as extended warranties, which were developed last year in conjunction with Toyota Financial Services," added Trautmann.

"Our aim is to sell a service or maintenance plan to at least ten-percent of the buyers of the new model. Trucks covered by Hino service and maintenance plans also open up growing possibilities for increasing buy-backs, which are attractive to many operators," Trautmann explained.



FAW A CONCRETE CHOICE

Mahlaka Lukas Makuwa is the owner and MD of Mafate Business Enterprises, primarily a mining supply company in the Sekhukhune district that includes the Steelpoort, Burgersdorp, Jane Furse and Phalaborwa areas. Makuwa's latest partner in the business is the team from FAW, whose trucks he took on test in September 2014. Today Makuwa runs nine FAW vehicles – four tippers of 15, 18 and 20-m³ capacity and two mixers of six and eight cubic-metre capacity. He monitors his transport operations on a cost-per-hour basis and ensures that, wherever possible, they run at full capacity or capability.

"I like the fact that they are strong, no-nonsense trucks. They are tough and work hard, like me," Makuwa laughs. He says success comes from keeping his finger on the pulse.

"I work long hours overseeing all the enterprises, but I also rely on my supervisors. My drivers keep log sheets, which are monitored for efficiency. As everyone knows, concrete is a perishable material. I certainly do not like dumping a load because the timing has gone wrong," he adds.

Makuwa loads the FAW trucks to legal capacity, and up to 35 t for shorter stretches, and he commends FAW for the vehicles' torque and power.

"Lastly, but very importantly, the service support I get from FAW Pretoria West, and specifically Pieter Gerber, is unmatched. He's prepared to go the distance for me. That's another reason I trust the FAW brand. Pieter and FAW work as hard as I do."

"I can trust FAW trucks; they are reliable. That's why I've planned to purchase another five ten-cubic-metre tippers for my asphalt operations," he says.

FOCUS

ON BUS AND COACH

Iveco becomes part of the

**LOWVELD
FAMILY**



SABOA 2017:

how to get people back into buses?

Should the judiciary interfere with

PUBLIC TRANSPORT?



BACK TO BUSES

GAVIN MYERS attended the 2017 Southern African Bus Operators Association (Saboa) conference, which centred on one particular question...

“How do you get people back onto buses?” asked economist Mike Schussler while giving the keynote address, and outlining his overview of the South African economy and his expectations for 2017.

“Buses are grabbing more market share compared to rail (45 percent), although overall numbers have been dropping (for both passenger rail and bus). While service delivery in the bus industry is far better than that of rail, the drop in numbers could be due to taxis, people buying cars and car sharing, or, in terms of rail, costs that have been increasing more quickly than in the bus industry,” he said.

According to Schussler, subsidies alone won't get people back into buses... Service delivery for commuters (who are losing confidence and will be experiencing a decline in net disposable income for at least another year) will be key.

THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT TURNAROUND

Discussing the Department of Transport's (DoT's) turnaround strategy for public transport was the Department's Lisemba Manamela, who questioned

whether the targets that have been chased up to this point have been too ambitious.

“South Africans are now more sensitive to the quality of public transport service, but public transport in South Africa has suffered major underinvestment, which has driven down the quality and effectiveness of services. As a result, public transport suffers critical sustainability issues; notably low recapitalisation, poor maintenance practices and direct route competition.

“The time to invest is now. We have to use the lessons learnt over the last 20 years and transform with use of big data. Yes, it's possible to turn public transport around if we follow the lessons and include all stakeholders,” he said.

Guiding the process is the Integrated Public Transport Turnaround Plan, with which the public-transport industry will already be familiar. According to Manamela, this plan “seeks to propose appropriate short, medium and long-term interventions that would help to address current challenges and also enhance some of the prevailing measures, such as the introduction of integrated public-transport networks”.

The plan's policy objectives are clustered into five key areas in terms of the white paper on National

Transport Policy of 1996. Manamela gave an overview of the progress made in each area.

1. Public transport planning and regulation

"While we've made progress with Integrated Public Transport Network Plans (IPTNs) in metro areas, little has happened outside these areas, due to the lack of capacity for planning. To move forward, the DoT

needs to find ways to assist these areas. We are trying to identify the areas that need this assistance. What is key is to develop skills and make funding a non-issue by making public transport a 'basic service' within the provincial and municipal context.

2. Spatial transformation

"In this regard there are some embedded factors that will take a long time to resolve and will impact on cost. For example, South African cities have very low density, but an extensive road network.

"That impacts on how you plan transport in the long term. In terms of the proposals, we should first enhance areas that are densified through the implementation of new services. Solutions for metros cannot be solutions for cities and rural areas. All this has an impact on whether we have people who can do proper planning.



3. Public transport funding

"When you look at the share of funding (between modes) and the user numbers, the figures are distorted. Taxis provide 65 percent of public transport. This is because years of underinvestment in bus and rail transport has reduced the quality of these services.

"If we can rationalise the various pockets of funding there might be more ways we can improve public transport, but we cannot deny there is a need for increased public transport funding, despite economic conditions. Most importantly, we need to optimise the use of current resources and minimise leakages.

4. Customer-centred public transport

"Here we have to ensure that passenger transport services address user needs. Yes, there has been some improvement, but the process has been very slow and costly. Public transport services are still characterised by long travel times, unsafe vehicles and unreliable services. We have to develop a national norms and standards guide for public transport operations. The idea has to be to improve services to the user.

5. Public transport industry development

"This is about empowering current operators who are disadvantaged, while ensuring environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. The most



significant industry development to date is the inclusion of taxi operators in the formation of new IPTN services in some metropolitan areas.

"Nothing much has happened with subsidised commuter-bus services. These have been stagnant since 2003, due to funding constraints. We can only achieve meaningful industry development when services are renewed. Currently there's very little that we can do and services are collapsing. The bus industry must transform, and the taxi industry must take primary responsibility towards professionalisation of the sector," Manamela concluded.

WHITE PAPER UNDER REVIEW

Of course, the white paper on National Transport Policy is under review, as Themba Tenza, acting deputy director general: Integrated Transport Planning at the DoT, explained.

"Since 1996, some things have obviously changed – inadequate investment, access issues, scarcity of skills and limited enforcement," said Tenza. The revised white paper incorporates the input of specialists and stakeholders and has been split into modes, with the addition of a public transport chapter.

"It's important to note that the existing white paper is still very good and some of the things in it were not implemented, so we have not started fresh. There are a lot of developmental gaps that need to be closed – for example, access issues; for bus commuters, a lot of user frustration comes in when completing the last kilometre of their journey," Tenza said.

Tenza focused on roads and public transport as the two most pertinent sections of the white paper to Saboa delegates.

"We need our roads to be safer for all road users. Roadside testing of the compliance of vehicles with critical roadworthy requirements will be increased. The development of safer road infrastructure for all users should be prioritised. Compulsory road-safety audits will be undertaken and reviewed every five years.

"Our cities are running out of road space and we have emphasised 'non-motorised transport' – walking and cycling, before using public transport – which should be integrated into spatial development strategies," he said of roads.

"As a country, our two biggest challenges are integration and implementation. Public transport must work as a system and share the same space in a better way. The system of consultation extends the time needed to sort these things out..."

"The revision will seek to reposition the role of government. In the longer term, the government will seek a reduction in the cost to the state of the subsidisation of transport operations, which will be based on developing a more effective and efficient public transport system," he said.

The revised white paper is currently awaiting approval by Cabinet for gazetting for public comments.



It is hoped that it will be finalised and adopted by March 2018, with implementation following from April 2018.

"When this is gazetted for public comment, we would like you to have a look at it and influence it for the better," Tenza urged the conference delegates.

B-BBEE DRAFTS AND AMENDMENTS

Kgomotso Selokane, MD of Kgoselo Empowerment, gave an update of current black economic empowerment (BEE) legislation.

"There are a few changes that we can't discuss as they are in an embargoed stage. What's of primary importance now is to know how the targets have moved," she began.

According to Selokane, ownership has moved from 30 to 40 percent. "This is a sector where ownership is something that is able to go to those that make up a majority of our economy," she commented. Ownership by black women has increased to 20 percent.

Management control remains much as it was, except that women in semi-skilled and unskilled positions have been accounted for. "When we did an analysis of the tiers of employment in the industry, we found that women were few and far between in



this space. The idea was to create upward mobility to management by introducing women lower down and training them up," Selokane explained.

Skills development is also a priority element. "The fundamental change in the bus industry is that we've named the differences between the learnerships. The wording that spoke to unemployed people was that any type of training would be on the BEE matrix. We realised that that works against what we are trying to achieve with BEE, so we aligned it to remove ambiguity. The target was also then increased."

Bus commuter enterprise supplier development is another priority element. "We spent three months last year doing a roadshow to small bus operators to find out their wants and needs. We realised we need to incorporate them into the value chain and create a model that prevents them just waiting for negotiated contracts to arrive," said Selokane.

Points for preferential procurement have been reworked, with a focus on the 51-percent black-owned entities. "You need to show that there is inclusivity of suppliers in your supply chain. The codes will come out with clear instruction to say the subcontracting roots are viable and sustainable," Selokane told delegates.

Socio-economic development has been amended and now needs to centre on sector-specific initiatives.

"We had not included a specialised scorecard for buses, which was one of the biggest barriers to transformation. This now speaks to all organs of state, section 21 companies and entities (that are not necessarily non-governmental organisations) that own buses. A big emphasis of this is skills development and to bring in the youth; we believe government should do a little more than the private sector.

"The process was not just about the numbers and to create BEE based on law, but to make sure that there is inclusive participation throughout," Selokane concluded.

With a range of pertinent topics discussed over the two-day conference, we could never report on all that was said and done. However, all presentations are on the Saboa website for download. **F**



Under promise and **OVER DELIVER**

Scania South Africa presented a development of its front-engine bus chassis at the 2017 Southern African Bus Operators Association (SABOA) conference. GAVIN MYERS finds out more

Alan Hugo, general manager for bus and coach at Scania South Africa, is a man on a mission. Having taken over management of the bus and coach division of Scania South Africa in January, Hugo has set about tying up the company's strategy and product offering with the needs of its customers, more tightly than it has ever been before.

"We are changing the mindsets of our sales teams, and it begins with the relationships between them and our customers," Hugo says. "Our salesmen need to be key-account managers and be the single point of call for any issues the customer may have. I like to lead from the front and put this forward in my interaction with our customers."

fitted with an automatic transmission and wearing a Marcopolo Torino body that offers seating for 65 passengers.

"The F-type chassis is a front-engine commuter bus available with either 250 hp (4x2) or 310 hp (6x2) drivetrains. It fills a gap in our product portfolio and broadens our market offering, being aimed at a variety of applications, such as the inner-city and rural commuter segments – among the biggest in the South African bus market," Hugo explains.

It would seem that there is a degree of flexibility built into the package – Hugo agrees. "Parabolic suspension, which is very durable, is fitted front and rear on the F250, while the F310 features air suspension at the rear. There are several operational advantages with the automatic gearbox, such as reduced maintenance requirements, safety and driver comfort."

Both models are powered by Scania's modular 9,3-litre, five-cylinder engine. In the F250, 184 kW (250 hp) and 1 250 Nm are on tap, while the F310 offers 228 kW (310 hp) and 1 550 Nm between 1 000 and 1 350 r/min.

With a focus on quality, Scania will be running this vehicle as a demo unit to show its full potential, and it is using the Control Package version of the Scania Fleet Management system to monitor performance. This neatly leads us to the second part of the Scania total solution – offering the customer peace of mind and improved total operating costs.

"There are so many exciting developments coming up," says Hugo. "We're in the process of implementing Scania Insurance that will be specifically relevant to the overall bus market. We're also working closely with other departments to make sure we can give our customers a tailor-made, and complete, solution.

"I've always said that the actual asset is the driver not the vehicle. There's a need for skilled drivers, so driver training is another priority for us. All these solutions offer huge benefits to the customer."

In a market filled with tough competition and economic, political and legislative issues, the more benefit a customer can derive from their partnership with their chosen vehicle supplier, the better.

"Our customers are like family; we develop long-standing relationships and endeavour to also bring value to the customer's customer," Hugo concludes. **F**



ABOVE LEFT: Scania's F250 4x2 automatic is tasked with expanding the brand's product portfolio.

ABOVE RIGHT: Alan Hugo is driving many exciting developments within Scania SA's bus business.

Of course, this strategy aligns with the restructuring of the Scania organisation that has taken place over the past few years, where more emphasis has been placed on giving greater independence to the various regions and divisions.

"This has worked well and paid dividends on the truck side of the business, but it requires a bit of a mind shift when it comes to buses and coaches. Scania has a different culture to a lot of other businesses; we have a real 'we-can' attitude that is about more than just moving metal ... it's about offering a total solution that gives the customer peace of mind," Hugo exclaims.

Naturally, that total solution begins with the metal – the actual vehicle. At Saboa 2017, Hugo is clearly enthusiastic when discussing the all-new F-type chassis on display – specifically, the F250 4x2 model,

EVERYTHING IN ONE

At the 2017 Southern African Bus Operators Association (Saboa) conference, Volvo introduced a new, versatile, environmentally friendly chassis. GAVIN MYERS finds out more

The chassis in question is the raised-platform Volvo B8R, which can suit any need from city commuter, to semi-luxury or coach applications. There's also a low-entry version; the B8RLE. The only differences with this version are the low-entry areas from the front of the bus and up to the rear axle. This version is naturally suited to a bus rapid transit (BRT) operation that has both requirements.

"The versatility is beneficial to a lot of operations," says Marius Botha, general manager, bus division. "It comes from the build and the horsepower. While the bus features a lot of technology, the chassis build is simplified to meet the demands and requirements of the bodybuilder."

This includes chassis preparation with pre-installed brackets to reduce welding and cutting during the bodybuilding process. "We have three or four bodybuilder partners in South Africa with whom our industrial experts from Europe and Asia are conducting training," he says.

That's the build, but, as Botha mentions, the drivetrain is another component that makes this vehicle special. Powering the vehicle along is a 246 kW (330 hp) eight-litre Volvo engine.

Although it replaces the seven-litre Deutz motor, torque has been kept at the same 1 200 Nm, which meets the requirements of most segments. Furthermore, it is offered in Euro-3, Euro-5 or Euro-6 variants – the only components to change being the exhaust after-treatment systems and computer software.

"We've upped the power, which assists with acceleration, gradeability and startability in stop-start applications. We previously offered Euro 5, and Euro 6 is achieved via a combination of exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) and selective catalytic reduction (SCR)," he explains.

I ask if Euro 6 is viable in South Africa. "It's customer preference – if the operator or tender requires it, then we have the vehicle available. It depends on the type of operation," explains sales engineer Vinesh Rambaran.

Drive is via either a ZF Ecolife six-speed or Voith Diwa.6 gearbox, both automatic with intarders.

Rambaran then unleashes an onslaught of acronyms ... "It has disc brakes all round with ABS, EBS, ESP and TCS. These systems give the bus outstanding stability and predictable road behaviour, which contributes to passenger safety. With the help of Volvo Driver Training and the advanced technology on the B8R chassis, performance is optimised and fuel consumption is minimised."

Adding to the inbuilt safety features is a door brake system, which will prevent the vehicle from running if the passenger door is open.

Interestingly, the suspension system is full air, though Botha assures that it is perfectly robust. "It can handle well-maintained dirt roads. We have a lot of buses running at mines and it's not been a problem," he says.

In the interests of longevity, the B8R has received the Tropical Cooling pack, which includes an updated radiator system and greater cooling capacity for the South African climate.

Aftermarket manager, Carlos Álvaro, explains that service intervals vary; from up to 20 000 km in a city application, to 30 000 km in coach/inter-city application.



From left: Volvo's Carlos Álvaro, Vinesh Rambaran and Marius Botha with the new Volvo B8R chassis.

"The standard vehicle warranty is one-year unlimited mileage on the entire chassis and two-years/200 000 km on driveline components. We're also able to tailor-make extended warranties and maintenance contracts, depending on the operational and customer requirements," he says.

Finally, the driver has not been forgotten, as theoretical and practical driver training and orientation is conducted, followed by refresher training at set intervals.

The Volvo Telematics fleet-management system is an optional extra; giving customers the choice of four packages from the most basic to the Driver Behaviour package, which utilises Volvo Bus I-Coaching that gives the driver immediate feedback as he drives.

Currently the B8R is completely built up in Sweden, but the Volvo Durban plant is ready for completely knocked-down assembly as soon as there is sufficient demand. **F**

A jewel in the IVECO CROWN



Family businesses have been the backbone of entrepreneurship for many years. A key factor is their longevity, which translates to these businesses becoming a beacon in the areas in which they operate. Lowveld Bus Services is one such company

Rural development has become a major growth factor in the South African economy. This phenomenon has created hubs of new business activities in the smaller surrounding towns, including those that cater for citizens from remote villages who require reliable transport.

Lephalale (previously Ellisras) in the Limpopo province has experienced tremendous growth in the area since 1975, when the Grootegeeluk Coal Mine was built, as well as the Mataba Power Station in 1983. Today it continues to expand with the construction of the nearby Medupi Power Station, which has created ongoing demand for labour and related services, including public transport.

One enterprise that has risen to the occasion is Lowveld Bus Services. Established in 1983, the company has developed into one of the top bus operators in the region, having exponentially grown with the demand for transport. One of the founders of the company, Louis Rossel, continues to be active in the business as CEO, while son Frans Rossel heads a strong management team as the general manager.

"The success of the company has been our ability to adapt to the diversity in the changing landscape and to gear our business accordingly. Our fleet of buses reflects our ability to cater for the diverse demands of our market – from commuter transport to semi-luxury coaches and minibus executive transport," says Frans Rossel.

Lowveld Bus Services has more than 320 buses in its fleet and services an area within a radius of 170 km from Lephalale, transporting an average of 35 000 commuters daily on various routes (at least 35 percent are gravel). The recent delivery of 30 new Iveco Afriway commuter buses and four Daily 23-seater minibuses emphasises the increasing size of the fleet, which has

trebled in the last seven years.

The Iveco Daily buses have been fitted with velour upholstery and air-conditioning. They will be used mainly to transport executives from the major contracting companies involved with the Medupi Power Station project.

At the handover, Frans Rossel commented: "In selecting Iveco we deviated from our current product portfolio, but after a long-term demonstration of the Iveco Afriway, we were convinced that it was well suited to our operation.

"The low level of electronics in the vehicles makes them ideal from a maintenance point of view, especially as we are operating in rural areas. We also opted for 16 vehicles fitted with the Voith automatic transmissions and will be monitoring their performance very closely.

"As for the Iveco Daily we selected the 18 m³ unit, the largest model in the range, and fitted it with the minimum number of seats so that occupants will be able to travel in comfort with no legroom restrictions," he continues.

The family's passion for the business goes beyond mere public transport; it is passionate about running a well-maintained fleet. For instance, its highly trained technicians are able to refurbish bodywork, engines, transmissions and all mechanical parts. This ensures an extension of the economic life of each vehicle.

"This latest additional investment in Iveco products ensures that Lowveld Bus Services is well positioned for future growth in the area. The 51-percent empowerment shareholding may be a major contributor to our future development, but the company will remain a family managed business, proud in the knowledge that our strong management team and loyal staff will continue to embrace diversity," concludes Frans Rossel. **F**



Judicial UNDERREACH?

VAUGHAN MOSTERT presents a transport case study for the judiciary's role in transport spending

Did you hear the one about the three judges who walked into a bar? Neither did I. Nowadays, few people joke about the judiciary, which has earned the deep respect of the community for a string of awesome judgments on constitutional issues. Long may it continue.

On the other hand, some people seem to be having a problem with "judicial overreach". So where should the judiciary draw the line? As usual, the transport field is a grey area. Bearing in mind that South Africa spends R1 trillion a year moving people and things around (much of which is wasteful) it is an area that might benefit from deeper judicial scrutiny.

Let's illustrate this with a case study from Cape Town written almost 14 years ago. On October 13, 2003, Jonny Steinberg, then a freelance writer and now a professor at the University of the Witwatersrand, wrote a column in *Business Day* headed "Long-suffering commuters will not thank judges of appeal". I am indebted to him for most of what follows here.

"Two years ago," he wrote, "a group representing concerned rail commuters in Cape Town took Metrorail to court to demand that it do something about escalating levels of violent crime on trains.

"Western Cape High Court Judges Denis Davis and Belinda van Heerden duly handed down a stinging ruling against Metrorail, declaring it was failing to 'protect the (constitutional) rights of rail commuters to freedom from [...] violence, to human dignity, freedom of movement and to property'. They ordered Metrorail to come up with a plan to improve security, failing which it risked being held in contempt of court."

Jonny continues: "Metrorail appealed and went to Bloemfontein. In a judgment handed down last month (September 2003), five Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) judges laid into their High Court colleagues,

arguing that their judgment had no basis in law.

"The carrier's statutory obligation to run a commuter service 'in the public interest', three of the five appeal judges averred, meant no more than that Metrorail must administer the service 'with due regard to the total transport needs of the public'. There was no provision, they continued, 'for safety and security services to be provided by (Metrorail) to commuters'. Protecting commuters from crime was the duty of the police.

"Could Cape Town's commuters get a court order instructing the police to improve security on the trains? No, the SCA said. The judges accepted a South African Police Service submission that 'the allocation of more police to trains and railway stations will result in a loss of manpower elsewhere [...] considerable cost would have to be incurred with budgetary implications for the government's priorities and spending plans'.

"Courts, the (appeal) judges argued, had no business rewriting state budgets. They could only rule whether government distributed scarce resources in a reasonable way. It could not be argued, they continued, that police priorities were unreasonable."

Still with Jonny: "You can imagine how the judgment has gone down in Mitchells Plain and Athlone. All that counts in the ghettos is that people avoid trains like the plague on Fridays as predators prowl in search of weekly pay packets, lone women are afraid of using public transport to get to work, and ordinary people have lost control of a vital public space.

"From the vantage point of the Cape Flats, the story is that nobody is duty bound to get people to work safely; Metrorail and the police are shrugging their shoulders, and the appeal court is encouraging them to keep shrugging.

"Not a good thing on the eve of a closely contested



election; not a good message to be sending to thousands of commuters about to put a ballot in a box. Here's an election tip for the ruling party. Throw the SCA's judgment in the dustbin and flood the stations with cops. Put them on the trains. Rudolph Giuliani's famously successful zero-tolerance campaign in New York began on the subways. Why? Because more than half the city had to use them to get to work."

Thanks Jonny. (As it happened, the ANC lost the subsequent election in the Western Cape.)

Where does this leave us in 2017?

It goes beyond rail transport. When is government going to start fixing the feudal minibus-taxi industry? Taxi users also have constitutional rights – will a non-

governmental organisation institute a class action on their behalf?

Will the EFF's court case against Transnet succeed? Will the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (Outa) win the battle with the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral)? Is government distributing scarce resources in a reasonable way?

Maybe the courts should be rewriting the state's budgets! Weak planning and failure to integrate existing services at provincial and municipal level is adding billions to transport costs in the form of unnecessary private motoring. As for the Gautrain, a judicial inquiry is long overdue.

We have a lot to think about. Maybe the judiciary will still come to our rescue. **F**



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

BUS STOPS

INTRODUCING LION'S EXPLORER: THE NEXT GENERATION

MAN Automotive SA launched the second-generation Lion's Explorer bus to operators at the South African Bus Operators Association (Saboa) conference. The project, which has been quietly running for a year and a half, has been completed with the aid of MAN colleagues in Germany – meaning the Lion's Explorer 2 now fits in completely with the European range of Lion's family vehicles.

"We now have a fantastic product range, starting with the VW 17.210 to the double-decker. Nobody can provide such a product range in this market," says Markus Geyer, MD of MAN Automotive SA.

According to Philip Kalil-Zackey, head of bus at MAN Automotive SA, the Lion's Explorer 2 shares some commonality with its predecessor, such as the chassis, drivetrain and windscreens. However, there is much more new than old...

"There has been a complete restyling of the front and rear ends. This has enabled us to improve aerodynamics and lower the drag coefficient, which improves fuel consumption," he explains.

"Big, bonded windows give it a definite coach look, like a luxury bus. The structure is 3CR12, which is both light and corrosion resistant," he adds. "Other unique features as standard are an inswing door, new interior panels that are more customer friendly and a smaller driver's door (which is still one of the biggest in industry)," he adds.

The smaller driver's door is significant, as it has allowed the engineers at MAN to raise the engine's



air intake for buses that run in off-road conditions.

The 65 passengers will not be left wanting, either, as the redesigned interior features USB chargers at all seats and overhead parcel shelves. There are also full luggage lockers in the wheelbase and a rear boot.

Kalil-Zackey adds: "From a safety point of view we have LED daytime driving lights (the headlight cluster is from the TGX) as well as anti-lock braking, the latest electronic braking system (EBS 5), and an integrated Voith retarder. We can also add many other options, such as park distance control, camera systems, and driver enclosures."

The first Lion's Explorer 2 units rolled off the MAN Automotive SA Olifantsfontein production line at the end of June.



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