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NEWS

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# NAVIGATING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In an era defined by rapid technological evolution, it's essential to recognise the pivotal role that digitalisation plays in shaping the future of South Africa's heavy industry equipment sector. As we delve into this multifaceted topic, we uncover not only the significance of embracing digitalisation but also the substantial benefits it promises for businesses, the workforce, and the nation's economy as a whole.

South Africa's heavy industry sector is the lifeblood of its economy, encompassing mining, construction, manufacturing, and more. The equipment used in these industries has traditionally been robust and powerful, designed to endure the harshest conditions. However, in today's data-driven world, brawn alone is no longer sufficient.

In an industry where time is money, digitalisation is a game-changer. Real-time data collection and analysis enable businesses to optimise equipment performance, predict maintenance needs, and minimise downtime. Imagine a mining operation where sensors in trucks and excavators continuously monitor vital metrics like engine temperature and wear on components. When an issue is detected, maintenance teams are alerted before a breakdown occurs, saving precious hours and resources.

Moreover, advanced telematics systems can track equipment location and operator behaviour. This not only enhances safety

but also ensures that heavy machinery is used efficiently. It's about maximising every gallon of fuel, every ton of material moved, and every hour of operation.

Safety is paramount in heavy industry, where accidents can have devastating consequences. Digitalisation offers tools to improve safety significantly. For instance, wearable technology can provide real-time health and safety information to workers. Sensors on helmets or vests can monitor vital signs, detect exposure to harmful substances, and even alert nearby colleagues in case of an emergency. These innovations can save lives and prevent injuries.

Additionally, digital solutions allow for remote equipment operation, reducing the need for human presence in hazardous environments. Unmanned vehicles and remotely controlled machinery are becoming increasingly prevalent, minimising the risk to workers while maintaining productivity.

South Africa, like the rest of the world, is committed to sustainability and reducing its environmental footprint. Digitalisation contributes to this effort by optimising heavy equipment operations. Precise control systems can minimise fuel consumption and emissions, aligning with global sustainability goals.

Furthermore, data analytics can help identify areas where resources use can be reduced. For example, by analysing material flow in a manufacturing plant, businesses can identify opportunities to minimise waste and energy consumption. This not only benefits the environment but also the bottom line.

## Skilled Workforce Empowerment

As the heavy industry embraces digitalisation, the demand for skilled workers in technology-related roles surges. South Africa's workforce can benefit greatly from this transformation. The acquisition of digital skills is an investment in employability, as industries worldwide seek professionals who can navigate the digital landscape.

In response, South African educational

institutions and training programmes are adapting to equip the workforce with the necessary skills. It's not just about operating heavy machinery anymore; it's about managing, maintaining, and optimising digital systems that power these machines. In essence, it's an opportunity for the workforce to evolve alongside the technology.

## Global Competitiveness

South Africa's heavy industry equipment sector is not confined to its borders. It competes on the global stage. Digitalisation is a driver of competitiveness, allowing local businesses to be on par with international counterparts. When South African companies can operate efficiently, minimise downtime, and embrace sustainable practices, they become attractive partners in global supply chains.

Moreover, digitalisation opens doors to new business models. Equipment-as-a-Service (EaaS) is gaining traction, where businesses pay for equipment usage rather than ownership. This shift can democratise access to heavy machinery, enabling smaller enterprises to compete on a larger scale and fostering economic growth.

## The Path Forward

While the benefits of digitalisation are compelling, it's not without challenges. Cybersecurity is a paramount concern as critical equipment becomes more connected. Ensuring the protection of sensitive data and control systems is essential.

Additionally, the cost of implementing digital solutions can be daunting. However, businesses need to recognise that these investments are long-term strategies that pay off in terms of efficiency, safety, and competitiveness.

As South Africa navigates this digital journey, collaboration between government, industry, and educational institutions is crucial. Together, we can harness the power of digitalisation to drive progress and ensure that South Africa's heavy industry equipment sector continues to be a vital contributor to the nation's prosperity. The digital future is here, and it's time to seize it. 🌐

**Adriaan Roets - EDITOR**



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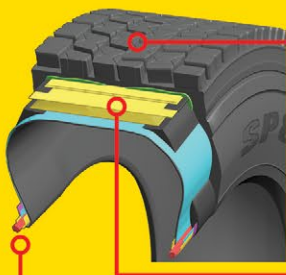


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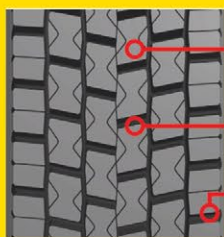
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## Exciting exhibitors lined up for Mega-T trucking, transport and trailer expo



Mega-T, the premier trucks, trailers, and transport expo, is all set to host its second event, and suppliers, service providers, and manufacturers have flocked to participate and showcase their products.

Taking place on 5, 6 and 7 October at the Diamantvallei Landgoed showgrounds, 20km east of Pretoria and powered by The Road Freight Association (RFA), this show promises to be a hub of innovation, collaboration, and progress in the transport and trucking sector.

Trucks, trailer parts and service supplier JMR Group will use Mega-T to launch its new private label range, Road Diamond. Rynhardt Mostert, Chief Executive Officer of JMR Group, says the company is collaborating with some key suppliers to exhibit its latest cutting-edge products.

"Mega-T's continuous growth offers us an excellent opportunity to engage with new customers and foster stronger connections with our existing ones in a relaxed social setting. Road Diamond may be a newcomer to the market, but its foundation is solidly rooted in years of experience and expertise from a team of seasoned industry professionals," explains Mostert.

"Designed specifically for South African roads and tailored to meet competitive price points, our slogan, 'Quality Priced Right,' encapsulates the essence of Road Diamond. The brand encompasses an extensive range of top-notch truck and trailer parts and accessories, all meticulously crafted for the discerning South African market."

Transport equipment manufacturer GRW has big plans for their participation at Mega-T. Its product range consists of fuel tankers, specialised liquid tankers, auger bulkers, pneumatic dry bulkers, refrigerated trailers and tautliner trailers. GRW will be hosting a daily lamb spitbraai and invites all show visitors to join in, gathering around the fire while enjoying a drink. Says Stephan Albertyn, Sales Executive for GRW: "The Expo provides an excellent opportunity for networking with other industry players and spending some valuable time with current and prospective customers." 🌟

## Introducing the new Cat 988 GC Wheel Loader

The new Cat 988 GC Wheel Loader delivers reliable and efficient operation, allowing customers to move more material at a lower cost per hour for a faster return on investment. The new loader offers up to 5% less fuel consumption and up to 15% lower maintenance costs than the Cat 988K. Designed to maximise life-cycle value in moderate production applications up to 2,000 hours per year, the 988 GC is capable of delivering production within 6% of the 988K in truck loading applications.

Easy to operate and maintain, the new 988 GC is optimised as a 45-tonne (50-ton) truck match loader. Its 3909 mm (12.8 ft) dump clearance delivers efficient loading up to the Cat 775G truck. With bucket payload matched to the 988K, the new 988 GC offers up to 670 tonnes/hour (740 tons/hour) productivity in shot rock truck loading applications and up to 527 tonnes/hour (581 tons/hour) for load-and-carry operations.

The highly durable structures of the new

loader are built for multiple life cycles and to withstand the toughest loading conditions. Built on the common Cat Large Wheel Loader platform, its full box-section rear frame resists torsional shock and twisting forces. Its front frame is redesigned to withstand larger loads and features a new lift arm design.

Maximum machine responsiveness is achieved through its Steering and Integrated Control (STIC™) steering, featuring up to 47% quieter operation. Its Cat Comfort Series III seat with a seat-mounted implement pod that moves with the seat enhances comfort and reduces operator fatigue. Operation is simplified through the intuitive operator interface, touchscreen display and easy-to-use soft detent implement controls. Machine vibration feedback to the operator is reduced using cab isolation mounts and seat air suspension, and an optional air-cooled and heated seat is available for increased operator comfort. 🌟



The new 988 GC is optimised as a 45-tonne (50-ton) truck match loader.

## WearCheck expands its skilled workforce

Condition monitoring company, WearCheck, provides a range of predictive maintenance services to help extend the life of industrial machinery, including the scientific analysis of used oil, coolant and other fluids, as well as reliability solutions, transformer chemistry services, water analysis, lubricant-enabled reliability (LER) and advanced field services.

Technicians and scientists with specialised skills and training perform these services for the company, which provides a world-class condition monitoring programme.

WearCheck conducts ongoing internal training and upskilling for promotion, and also recently brought in additional talent, to ensure that its growing customer base

continues to enjoy outstanding service. Some of the new appointments and promotions include:

- Siboniso Mathebula joined WearCheck as an instrumentation technician at WearCheck's Durban laboratory.
- Adel Pillay joined WearCheck as a laboratory technician – transformers, based in Durban.
- Mike Du Preez joined WearCheck as the area agent for the Eastern Cape region, based in East London.
- Yamkela Maganga was promoted to laboratory technician at WearCheck's Cape Town laboratory.
- Prudence Mahlalela was promoted to senior laboratory technician at the WearCheck Specialist Laboratory (WSL) in Johannesburg.
- Lynette Pillay was promoted to transformer laboratory supervisor



## Bell records revenue success and invests in product development

JSE-listed Bell Equipment (Bell) released interim results for 2023 and recorded continuing growth.

Leon Goosen, CEO of Bell, said that strong demand in most markets resulted in the group performing well. "We are particularly pleased about the sales growth during the period in the North American market," he said.

He explained that operating conditions were challenging, with ongoing supply chain issues and staff shortages in Germany, which constrained growth and the ability to fully capitalise on market demand. The planned increase in production volumes to meet higher customer demand, certain component shortages from suppliers and shipping delays from South Africa resulted in higher levels of components, work in progress and finished machines inventory and consequently higher interest-bearing liabilities and gearing at half-year-end.

Revenue for the period under review increased by 42% to R6 004,3 million.

Goosen says that new product development was progressing well and that in April this year, the group officially notified the market of the development of its latest product, the Bell Motor Grader. Customers and dealers will be able to experience the motor grader first-hand in preparation for the launch in late 2024. The prototype graders have been operating with great success in various applications.

Interest in the group's autonomous-ready E-series Articulated Dump Truck (ADT) continues to gain traction, with more applications adopting the technology in

several of Bell's markets, where pilot testing is taking place with some customers.

"The ease with which third-party guidance systems can be integrated into the standard truck platform, positions Bell as an obvious choice for applications that want to move in this direction. Labour shortages and decreased personnel risk in dangerous applications are the more common drivers of demand for these autonomous products."



Leon Goosen, CEO of Bell.

## Rokbak and the RA40 bring more smiles to Finland

The Rokbak RA40 has made its debut at Finland's largest exhibition of land construction and environmental maintenance machinery, Maxpo. Visitors were able to get up close to the RA40, courtesy of Kivisampo Oy, Rokbak's trusted dealer in the Nordic nation.

As a global exhibition, Maxpo presents 'the biggest and greatest machines' to almost 10,000 visitors at Hyvinkää Airfield, approximately 60 km north of the Finnish capital Helsinki.

In the first half of 2023, the Nordics accounted for 16% of the European market for ADTs. This is a 52% increase in share compared with 2022. In the Finnish market, the over-35 t class is the largest sector.

The RA40 has been on demonstration in Finland and will now be introduced to the wider market at the Maxpo show. Arriving in a straight-to-the-point sand-coloured palette, the 38-tonne RA40 is a heavy-duty articulated dump truck that makes light work of large-scale quarry, mine, and construction jobs.

## Hy-Brid Lifts Announces Strategic Partnership with ASKO

Hy-Brid Lifts, an industry leader in high-quality, low-level access equipment, announces they have entered into a strategic partnership with ASKO, which is acquiring a majority stake in the company.

"The next chapter for Hy-Brid Lifts has started with this partnership with ASKO. We see this as a great opportunity for our customers as we will be bringing new products to the market, accelerating R&D and increasing our sales and service support," said Jay Sugar, CEO and President of Hy-Brid Lifts.

ASKO is headquartered in Turkey and operates in the construction machinery, agricultural machinery, energy and technology sectors through its eight companies and subsidiaries. ASKO currently owns ELS Lift, which produces a range of scissor lifts, vertical mast lifts and boom lifts; and MST Construction Machinery, which produces telehandlers and dirt equipment. This partnership will increase the Hy-Brid Lifts product offering and provide working capital for accelerated growth in all areas.

"We are very excited to welcome Hy-Brid Lifts and its skilled employees into the ASKO family. With Hy-Brid Lifts' track record of producing innovative high-quality products and having an established dealer network, this investment fits into ASKO's strategy to become a global player and expand in North America," said Sami Konukoğlu, Founder and Chairman of the Board of ASKO.

at WearCheck's Durban transformer laboratory.

- Loshini Govender was promoted to transformer diagnostician for WearCheck's transformers & WSL division in Johannesburg.
- Juliané Strydom was promoted to national sales manager, based at WearCheck Johannesburg. 🌟



Siboniso Mathebula.

## Eazi Access sponsors a JLG 340AJ for aircraft restorations

Eazi Access sponsored a JLG 340AJ Boom Lift for a few restoration projects at The South African Airways Museum Society, based at Rand Airport.

The machine was used to lift people to height for the aircraft's titles to be placed on the Vickers Viking as well as on the Starliner. It was also used to reach the tail fins of the Lockheed Starliner aircraft, to paint the fins.

This is not the first time Eazi Access has partnered with the SAA Museum Society to assist with their restoration projects. They were assisted by Eazi Access in October 2015 when a JLG 510AJ and a JLG 600SJ were sponsored to polish the Boeing 747-244B, "Lebombo". Lebombo is the jet that flew over the Rugby World Cup final at Ellis Park Stadium in 1995. 🌟



## Bobcat's new backhoe loader for the African market

Bobcat has launched the company's new B730 M-Series Backhoe Loader for markets in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) and CIS regions.

The B730 M-Series offers high performance, ease of operation and superior comfort, in a machine built to last with proven, high-quality components and signature Bobcat durability.

Conceived and built at the modern Doosan Bobcat manufacturing facility in Chennai, India, the B730 M-Series is a new addition to the Bobcat backhoe loader range, providing a model for the value market. Available in a choice of different configurations and matched with attachments for diverse applications, the B730 M-Series is ideal for use in construction, rental, roadworks, demolition, excavation, landscaping, and many other industries.

The B730 M-Series is designed with a strong focus on durability in challenging conditions, incorporating renowned industry-leading components known for their reliability and ease of service and maintenance in the field.



The B730 M-Series Backhoe Loader.

These high-quality, proven components are sourced from renowned brands, featuring the Perkins 1104 engine, Carraro axles and transmission, and Parker pumps, ensuring superior dependability and effortless serviceability.

The well-proven 94 HP Perkins High Torque engine is well-balanced with the hydraulic Tandem Gear Pump and Synchro Shuttle (SPS) transmission to provide excellent productivity and efficient fuel consumption. The B730 M-Series hydraulics also provide class-leading backhoe breakout

forces, along with the highest loader lift and push breakout in its class. This is coupled with backhoe digging depths of 4.63 m (standard arm) to ensure the B730 M-Series is perfect for any site.

The independent steering pump and hydraulics unloading system are standard – helping the machine to provide power only when needed, and keeping the systems cool in harsh working conditions. The front loader's 'return to dig' feature is also standard and assists productivity when dozing and loading materials. 🌟

## Levels of women working in construction is growing

The number of women participating in the construction industry in South Africa makes up only 10% of the labour force. But the trajectory of successful women in the industry is strengthening.

Two such successful women are Tshidi Mndzebele and Dr. Julia Petla. Both women are CEOs of their respective companies, AvenirHoldings and Amedzo. AvenirHoldings is an engineering consulting and project management firm and also offers construction and facilities management, and training and development. Amedzo offers turnkey projects in various aspects of construction.

Mndzebele, a Professional Industrial Engineering Technologist and Certified Director, as well as a Master Builders Association North exco member, says that she was initially attracted to engineering because it was a male-dominated industry and wanted to increase her probability of employment. "I saw it as an opportunity both to challenge myself and overturn the gender stereotypes in engineering and allied industries," she laughs. "I wanted to make my mark."

Petla says, "Women definitely have to overcome the widely held view that construction work is better suited to men.



Tshidi Mndzebele.

Women in the industry have to work twice as hard to earn a seat at the table," she reflects, adding that the men don't make the industry one particularly welcoming to women.

One of the hidden barriers women face in construction is the boys' club mentality that plays out on the golf course or on Friday end-of-the-week braais. Aside from anything else, women tend to be excluded from such events.

Mndzebele says that women shouldn't

restrict themselves to certain roles within construction – they are more than capable of taking on any of them. "Women have a unique contribution to make because they see things differently. Where men see things in black and white, we see a more complex, holistic picture, so our decisions are perhaps more measured," she argues. "From a transformational point of view – so important in a world that is changing so fast – female leaders are often better at bringing everybody along." 🌟



## The construction industry proves its mettle despite the challenges

As South Africa celebrated an uptick in job creation, the construction industry added 104,000 jobs to the economy, outstripping trade by 12,000 new jobs.

Eben Meyburgh, Chief Executive Officer at GVK-Siya Zama, cautions that the industry is still bearing the yoke of unsustainable markups, disproportionate risk and the crippling loss of skilled construction professionals to jobs abroad.

Construction may be the second biggest employer locally, but it is highly regulated and constrained by legislation, with little to no assistance from the government. Help, he says, is not coming.

According to him the dire lack of skills in the local talent pool, unreasonable risk and exposure and sustained pressure on markups have forced the business to reevaluate the way it does things.

Fluctuating material prices are rarely protected by in-contract escalation clauses. Fixed-price contracts have always been popular in the private sector, but are now becoming the norm in the public sector. It's a trend that Meyburgh says adds undue risk to the contractor, given that currency fluctuations and global events have a significant impact on the price of materials.



Eben Meyburgh, Chief Executive Officer at GVK-Siya Zama

Throw in largely unskilled or inappropriate skilled labour expected to deliver high standards of finishes, often way beyond their abilities, as well as site disruption and work stoppages caused by militant and often violent forces, and it becomes clear why the industry finds itself in such a difficult place.

However, the industry remains the home of thousands of committed professionals.

"Doing business and staying in business is a challenge for the brave, and the con-

struction industry must continue to forge ahead and build on the foundations laid over many decades, provide opportunities to a committed and loyal workforce, and create new jobs.

The construction industry has always been an essential driver of economic growth and job creation in South Africa, and we must continue to innovate, adapt and persevere if we want to be part of the change our country needs to ensure its global success," concludes Meyburgh. 🌟

## Volvo Construction Equipment strengthens management team

Volvo Construction Equipment (Volvo CE) has announced a number of changes to its Executive Management Team (EMT) with two senior appointments designed to strengthen its global leadership and transformation journey.

Mats Sköldberg is appointed Head of Technology at Volvo CE. Most recently Sköldberg was Head of Technology for Volvo CE in China and has held a number of other senior technology roles in recent years.

Sköldberg will replace Thomas Bitter as the new Head of Technology, leading the development and delivery of Volvo CE's global technology strategy and continuing the company's journey into electromobility, connectivity and automation. Meanwhile, Thomas Bitter will be heading up the recently announced Compact Business Unit.

Jay Parker is appointed to the newly created EMT role of Head of Digital & IT. The creation of this new role at the EMT level reflects the importance of digital in the company's overall transformation journey.

Both appointments will support the company's leading cultural, sustainable and technological transformation while demonstrating the expertise and dynamism that is already embedded across all regions of Volvo CE.

Melker Jernberg, Head of Volvo CE, says: "Our leadership team will be greatly strengthened with the addition of Scott, Mats and Jay, as they join during a significant time of change for our industry. With their diverse experience –cross-functional understanding and genuine passion, I have no doubt we will continue to lead our company's sustainable transformation going forward."



Mats Sköldberg.



The JCB 540-170 Telehandler almost sells itself due to its many varied, safe and efficient uses.



# JCB TELEHANDLER HELPS OPIHI BUILDERS REACH NEW HEIGHTS

How do you get a sofa that is too large to go up a stairwell into a third-floor apartment, or what to do if your new fiberglass swimming pool needs to go into the backyard of your home that has no access there? It's pretty easy if you have a stable JCB 540-170 Telehandler and you simply extend its impressive 17-metre boom to reach those places with enough capacity for safe loads.

TALKING POINT



"Some of the machine's obvious uses are using the interchangeable bucket and fork arrangement, with its quick release pins, to move sand or stone aggregate and also pallets with bricks, cement bags, boxes of tiles or stacks of reinforcing steel and shuttering for concrete work."

Raygen Hurford, Construction Manager  
at Opihi Builders

QUICK TAKE



The JCB 540-170 can drive on public roads and can easily be moved between nearby sites without the use of lowbed transport.

The introduction does not need to rely on 'marketing-speak' catchphrases but rather on actual situations that faced Plettenberg Bay-based Opihi Builders.

Opihi Builders is owned by New Zealand-born Pete Henderson and 'Opihi' is a Maori word that means growth.

According to Construction Manager, Raygen Hurford, the company has made its name in the picturesque Garden Route towns of Plettenberg Bay and Knysna since its founding in the mid-1980s and builds mostly luxury residential and holiday homes and high-density housing in secure complexes. Some commercial





The JCB 540-170 Telehandler's stability is brought about by its mass of 12 tons and all-wheel drivetrain.



Bell Equipment, with its large service footprint, had become the South African distributor for JCB equipment.

17-metre



The machine features a 17-metre-long boom that can be used in a variety of applications in the installation or removal of items.



Using the interchangeable bucket and fork arrangement the telehandler can move sand or stone aggregate and also pallets with bricks.

buildings make up the balance of the company's portfolio.

"We can happily say we've built our reputation on delivering quality, ethical work and bringing projects in on time and on budget," Raygen says. "We have noticed changes in the industry though as skilled labour becomes scarcer and clients demand shorter turn-around times, which has led to us becoming more and more mechanised."

"It's important to note that mechanisation doesn't take away jobs but rather complements the human capital that is present."

#### JCB 540-170 to the rescue

To this end, Ophi Builders had previously

owned a JCB 540-170 Telehandler and with an upturn in the company's post-Covid order book, decided to sell the older machine out of hand and buy a new one from Bell Equipment in Port Elizabeth where Sales Representative Tom Swartz assisted them.

"Having owned a similar machine before, the JCB 540-170 Telehandler almost sells itself due to its many varied, safe and efficient uses," Raygen explains. "From the outset, it immediately replaces antiquated technology like belt conveyors taking building material and support structures up to raised floors on multistoried building sites because of the long reach its 17-metre boom offers."

#### Flexible machine

Raygen goes on to tell us about the JCB 540-170 Telehandler's mobility being road legal – it can drive on public roads and can easily be moved between nearby sites without the use of lowbed transport. He mentions its tight turning circle through innovative all-wheel steering, making it the ideal tool in tight spaces like courtyards and parking areas.

"Some of the machine's obvious uses are using the interchangeable bucket and fork arrangement, with its quick release pins, to move sand or stone aggregate and also pallets with bricks, cement bags, boxes of tiles or stacks of reinforcing steel and shuttering for concrete work," Raygen says. "Then there are the less obvious uses like pouring concrete, moving six-metre shipping containers or waste skips and even roof trusses."

"We plan to fit a pedestrian cage on the forks to ensure the safety of people having to work at heights. Site safety is taken seriously on all our sites and the JCB 540-170 Telehandler goes a long way to ensure those standards remain in place."

#### Service with a smile

According to Raygen, they were very happy to see that a truly South African company such as Bell Equipment, with its large service footprint, had become the South African distributor for JCB equipment. This now gives them the option of getting their JCB 540-170 Telehandler serviced at the Bell Equipment branch in either Port Elizabeth or George, depending on which one is closest to the where the machine is deployed.

"From previous experience, we know that local plant hire companies in our immediate area don't offer telehandlers for hire and we're confident that, as it happened with our previous machine, our JCB Telehandler will earn additional revenue for us in that market, which is a bonus," Raygen adds. "We've always believed in being innovative and yes, we did move that couch into a third-floor apartment and lifted that swimming pool shell over a house using the 17-metre-long boom on the previous machine."

Raygen is full of praise for the JCB 540-170 Telehandler's stability brought about by its mass of 12 tons and all-wheel drivetrain. Experience has taught them that the machine's 100-litre diesel tank is hard to empty as the machine runs very economically.

"We've worked with other telehandler brands in the past, but the JCB 540-170 Telehandler is an overall superior machine," he says. 🌟



The S7X can support operators on environmentally sensitive sites, in noise-restricted areas, and for indoor operations.



## THIS YEAR SKID STEERS SHOWED GRIT

**In the world of heavy machinery, skid steers are often seen as compact workhorses within a fleet. However, this year has demonstrated once again that dynamite indeed comes in small packages. The unveiling of the world's first all-electric skid steer loader has brought a surge of innovation to the industry. Let's dive into the fascinating developments in the world of skid steers, especially in the South African market.**

**I**n South Africa, skid steers are making waves with innovative designs and powerful capabilities. The introduction of the all-electric Bobcat S7X and John Deere's impressive 318G Skid Steer demonstrate the industry's commitment to pushing boundaries and providing operators with efficient, eco-friendly, and high-performing machines.

As skid steers continue to evolve, they remain essential tools across various industries, from construction to agriculture, contributing to productivity and success.

With these advancements, skid steers are proving once again that their small stature hides their immense power and potential.

Early this year, innovation reached new heights with the introduction of two groundbreaking concept machines from Bobcat. Building on the 2022 release of the Bobcat T7X, the world's first all-electric compact track loader, Bobcat unveiled the Bobcat S7X, the world's first all-electric skid-steer loader at Conexpo.

Scott Park, CEO, and Vice Chairman of Doosan Bobcat expressed the company's commitment to pushing boundaries for the benefit of their customers.

"At Bobcat, we are always pushing the boundaries to explore the next leading advancements that help our

customers accomplish more and propel the industry forward. We are committed to innovating for our customers' needs first and foremost, so that they can become more efficient, more productive, and more successful."

### A Game Changer

The S7X stands as something of an engineering marvel, boasting an all-electric design powered by a 60.5-kWh lithium-ion battery.

It features electric drive motors and



"We are always pushing the boundaries to explore the next leading advancements that help our customers accomplish more and propel the industry forward. We are committed to innovating for our customers' needs first and foremost so that they can become more efficient, more productive, and more successful."

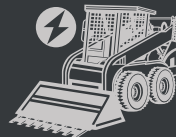
Scott Park, CEO, and Vice Chairman of Doosan Bobcat

The bobcat S7X with a bucket attachment.



## QUICK TAKE

The introduction of the all-electric Bobcat S7X and the powerful John Deere 318G Skid Steer showcases innovation in the skid steer industry.



The Bobcat S7X is the world's first all-electric skid-steer loader, offering instant torque, zero emissions, and up to 8 hours of operation on a single charge.



John Deere's 318G Skid Steer combines advanced technology with durability, featuring easy access, heavy-duty drivetrains, and versatile wheel options.



Skid steers in South Africa serve a wide range of applications, enhancing productivity across industries.



utilises ball screw actuators for lift and tilt functions. This combination of battery and electrical powertrain delivers remarkable performance, with instantaneous torque that rivals traditional loaders. Notably, the S7X balances sustainability and performance by emitting zero emissions while outperforming its diesel-powered counterparts.

Operators will find the S7X offers a smooth and comfortable experience, marked by minimal vibration and nearly silent operation.

With the capability to operate for up to 8 hours on a single charge (depending on the application), it ensures most operators a full day's work, even accounting for breaks and downtime. A full charge takes approximately 10 hours. Joel Honeyman, Vice President of Global Innovation at Doosan Bobcat, noted that the S7X can support operators on environmentally sensitive sites, in noise-restricted areas, and for indoor operations.

It's important to note that the S7X skid-steer loader is currently being introduced as a prototype machine.

### Enter John Deere

John Deere Africa Middle East has also made its mark in the skid steer market. They introduced their Skid Steer range, which includes the 316G and the powerful 318G Skid Steers. The 318G is engineered with durability, productivity, and operator comfort as top priorities, making it a standout choice for various applications. The John Deere





318G Skid Steer brings advanced technology and the brand's expertise to the fore, delivering exceptional results across a wide range of applications, from construction to agriculture and material handling.

#### Full-Tilt access

The 318G offers easy access through the rear door to dipsticks, fuel and fluid filler necks, and filters, all at ground level. Moreover, the operator's station can be swung up and out of the way in under two minutes, providing effortless access to the drivetrain.

The machine's final-drive chains, lubricated with oil, are built to withstand daily wear and tear without requiring frequent adjustment. Reinforced drive sprockets ensure long-lasting durability.

#### Wheel options

With various wheel options, the 318G can reduce its size for easy manoeuvring through narrow openings. It boasts sufficient axle torque, optimised boom and bucket breakout forces, and the ability to handle excavation, prying, and pushing through clay while maintaining a heaped bucket.

Thanks to its low centre of gravity, 30-degree bucket rollback, optional hydraulic self-leveling, and ride control, the 318G maintains full buckets and loaded forks effectively. Up to two sets of counterweights can be added for increased capacity. Silage defacers, material/manure scrapers, bale huggers, bale spears, buckets, and more are available to enhance its capabilities.

#### Easy operation

The overhead panel provides a convenient arrangement, with machine information on the left side and control switches on the right.

An easily readable LCD monitor offers comprehensive information and control options, including operating conditions and advanced diagnostic capabilities.

Large coolers ensure uninterrupted performance, even under demanding, high-load conditions. The engine-mounted cooling fan, driven by a belt, provides optimal cooling performance.

#### Radial and vertical boom lift

The 318G's robust cross-section boom arms and heavy-duty upper links make it capable of withstanding challenging tasks for long-term durability. Its vertical lift capabilities increase lift height and extend reach at the top of the lift path, enhancing stability during operations. Radial lift capabilities extend reach at intermediate lift heights, making it ideal for digging, grading, and backfilling tasks. 🌟



The John Deere 318G skid steer is now available for the Africa market.



The 318G's robust cross-section boom arms and heavy-duty upper links make it capable of withstanding challenging tasks for long-term durability.





# The Power to Predict

What if next-generation  
Telematics and AI could predict if  
you're going to break new ground?  
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The power to predict vision relies on historical and predictive data to digitally transform our business to ensure that we are future-proof.

## Ctrack CHANNELS ITS POWER TO PREDICT

**Ctrack, a leading player in the telematics business, is transforming its business with the slogan 'The Power to Predict' at the nucleus of this new strategy as they look to meet their customers' high demands in a changing and challenging environment.**

**C**track has a long history of market leadership in telematics, fleet management and technology development that facilitated industry disruptions throughout its 38-year history. Highlights include developing the technology behind the first multi-box tracking unit in 1997, Discovery Insure's usage-based insurance in 2011 and the launch of Crystal in 2022.

"With the emergence of big data, Ctrack realised that we needed to offer our clients solutions that allow them to utilise this data to their advantage in the most efficient way possible," says Hein Jordt, Chief

Executive Officer of Ctrack.

Ctrack's brand transformation reflects its commitment to providing cutting-edge data and telematics solutions that stretch beyond traditional fleet management capabilities. Ctrack recognises the immense potential that lies within harnessing data to drive actionable intelligence and optimise business operations.

"This is more than a cosmetic change, it signifies Ctrack's dedication to innovation and commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements. The revamped brand reflects our belief in the transformative potential of data insights and predictive power," adds Jordt.

### Power with purpose

The power to predict goes hand in hand with the core pillars that have always been the motivating factor for Ctrack's ongoing research and development efforts as they aim to assist customers in reducing risk and

"With the emergence of big data, Ctrack realised that we needed to offer our clients solutions that allow them to utilise this data to their advantage in the most efficient way possible."

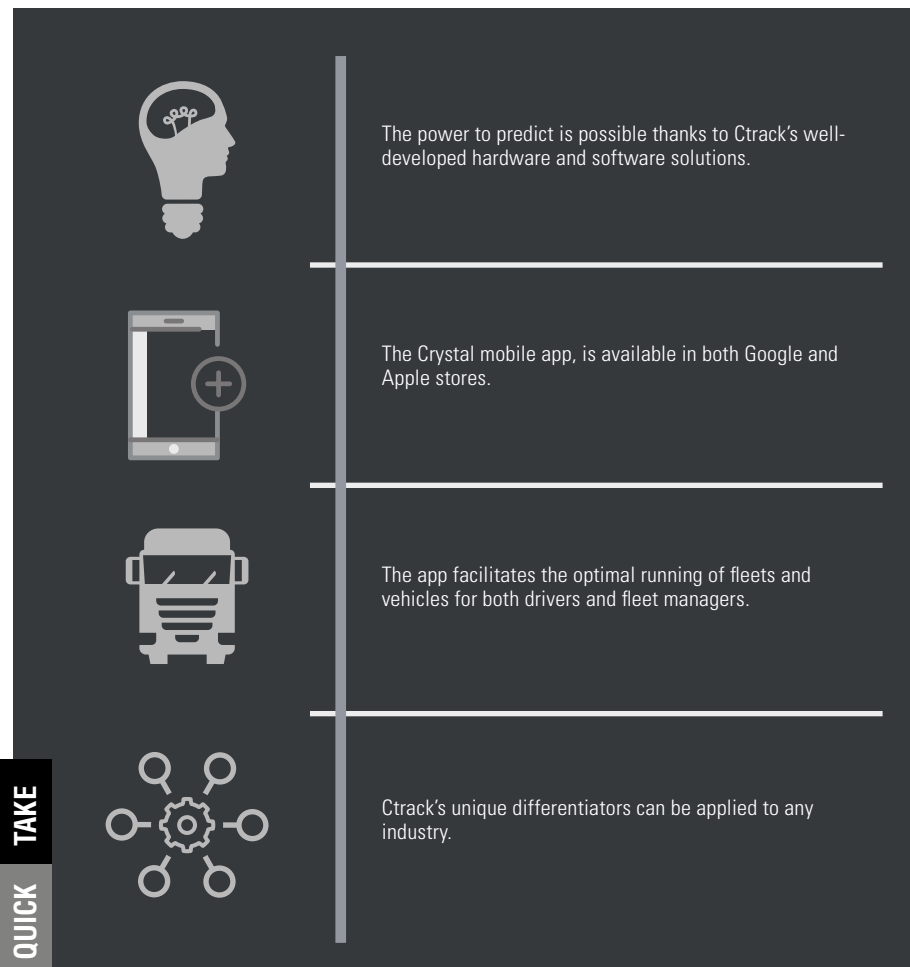
Hein Jordt, Chief Executive Officer of  
Ctrack







The app can be optimised for any fleet, whether on-site or on the road.



minimising safety hazards, optimising fleet productivity and efficiency, improving asset management and tracking, managing and improving driver behaviour and automating and streamlining compliance. These pillars, along with a sense of urgency, have allowed Ctrack to develop flourishing long term business relationships.

The power to predict is possible thanks to Ctrack's well-developed hardware and software solutions that give users the ability to know what is happening with their vehicles, drivers and cargo at any time of the day via a single platform.

That software solution is Crystal, an all-encompassing, cloud-based platform. Crystal is a single platform where AI telematics meets data intelligence and offers all the functionality that consumers have come to know and love in one location. The result is a business tool that offers so much more than simple reporting.

Live data allows fleet managers to keep their fingers on the pulse of daily operations, and if there is anything out of the ordinary, they will have the foresight to act before they are forced to react.

### For small to big business

Whether you are a small business owner with a single delivery vehicle or are managing a fleet of hundreds of trucks across the continent, you are guaranteed to move better when you have the power to predict

"We are passionate about empowering our clients using cutting-edge technologies to transform quality data into actionable insight and foresight that allows our customers to predict the future with certainty, optimise efficiencies and make informed decisions based on good quality data," adds Jordt.

### Versatile telematics

Crystal is fully customisable, so there's no limit to what you can have sight of and keep tabs on. A multitude of data is collected, interpreted and packaged, allowing customers to make informed decisions and continuously refine their operations. With data and insights at their fingertips, Ctrack can predict scenarios and put measures into place to negotiate these situations as safely and efficiently as possible.

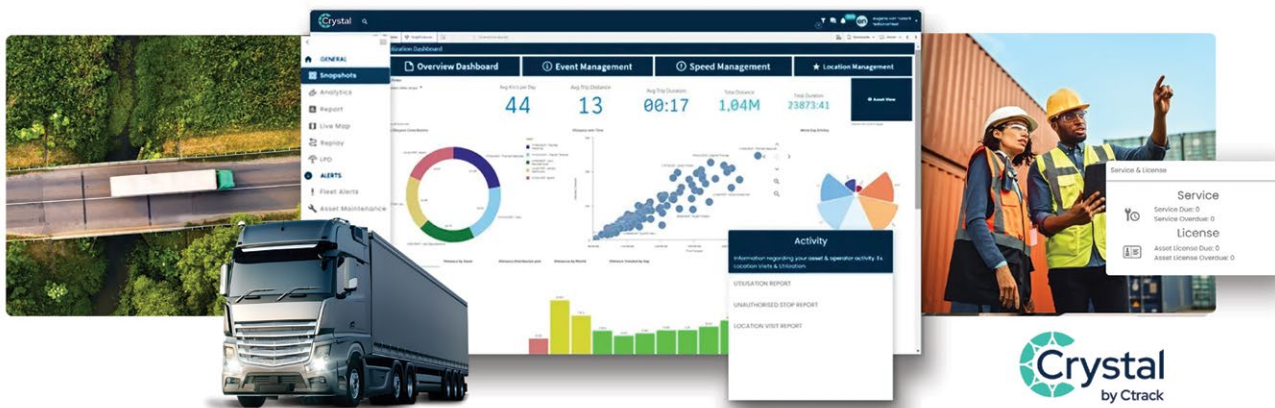
"Owners have less time to manage fleets, but Crystal allows them to do so much more and gain a deeper understanding of data, as well as clear predictions with a limited number of clicks," says Jordt.

Crystal allows for job management, assigning tasks and planning routes in the most efficient manner. Alerts ensure that the right people are informed ahead of time, every time. At any point in the day, fleet managers can rely on a snapshot summary



**This is more than a cosmetic change, it signifies Ctrack's dedication to innovation and commitment to staying at the forefront of technological advancements. The revamped brand reflects our belief in the transformative potential of data insights and predictive power.**





Ctrack's brand transformation reflects their commitment to providing cutting-edge data and telematics solutions that stretch beyond traditional fleet management capabilities.



that gives them an instant view of crucial, relevant data in real-time. High-quality data is packaged in the simplest format possible, facilitating the reporting and insights that allow for swift, well-informed decision-making.

### Effective time management

Crystal allows for the effortless scheduling of what needs to go where and when it needs to be there and ensures that it happens. The power to predict is beneficial to your clients too. Communication down the supply chain has been optimised with the addition of powerful modules such as 'Electronic Proof of Delivery', which ensures that all parties are automatically kept up to date with objective and transparent evidence that operational milestones are achieved, with the foresight to make changes ahead of time, if need be.

Users are now able to add camera and video technology to the Crystal suite,

offering a live feed into the inside of the vehicle and of the person operating it, granting unprecedented insight into what is happening at that exact moment. Crystal video gives fleet managers eyes everywhere, accessible from any smart device at any given time, from one platform.

### Bureau backing

In addition, the Ctrack Bureau service facilitates the use of AI technology that works along with the camera systems to automate the process of identifying transgressions, significantly reducing the leg work required by fleet managers in managing driver behaviour more efficiently, with deeper insights that allow for better decisions in a tough trading environment.

Crystal's scalability extends even further with SMART integrations, seamlessly connecting with third-party applications that cater to your specific industry needs. This includes activating bespoke SMILE

scripts, monitoring trailers, implementing breathalysers or keeping an eye on temperature in the cold chain. Ctrack's unique differentiators can be applied to any industry.

The flexibility of 'Crystal Analytics' means that users have all the functionality they want or only what they need. Users have the ability to add and customise modules according to their specific needs. Crystal will gather all the information required to equip you with the insights to make better business decisions. Crystal presents this information in a way that is easy to access, simple to understand and practical to apply.

"One single platform allows for the management of fleets as well as a wide variety of insights into how to improve. Crystal can predict what will happen based on previously captured historical data, ensuring optimal use of vehicles and limiting downtime by proactively taking action such as ordering parts or making workshop bookings," adds Jordt.

### Easy to access

The Crystal mobile app, available in both Google and Apple stores, completes the loop as it is designed to provide valuable information about daily operations in the simplest way possible and facilitate the optimal running of fleets and vehicles for both drivers and fleet managers.

"The *power to predict* vision relies vision relies on historical and predictive data to digitally transform our business to ensure that we are future-proof. With our wide variety of hardware solutions working in conjunction with Crystal, and our constant investment in research and development, we look forward to offering our customers world-class products for many more years to come," concludes Jordt. 🌟

# ELECTRIC VEHICLES ARE VITAL FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE

**The fast-evolving emobility sector presents a significant opportunity for sustainable growth and job creation in Africa, but some constraints need to be overcome.**

By Yael Shafrir, Associate Director at Webber Wentzel

**M**any South Africans who struggle every day to reach their places of work using minibus taxis or cars on congested motorways may find it hard to believe that an emobility revolution is about to happen. But there are several trends moving in that direction.

Emobility refers to electric vehicles, ideally powered by renewable energy sources, which may range from two- and three-wheeled vehicles to cars and buses.

Some recent developments are underway in South Africa which are laying the foundation of the future emobility revolution. This will help the country to meet its carbon reduction commitments under the Paris Agreement. Promising moves include the recent publication of the South African Renewable Energy Masterplan, which embraces battery storage and renewable energy.

Work is underway on an EV Masterplan and a Critical Minerals Masterplan, which will have input from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition and the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, among others.

In the private sector, BMW announced in June 2023 that it would be manufacturing the BMW X3 as a plug-in hybrid for global export at its plant in Tshwane, South Africa. In the last couple of years, there has been a significant increase in the importation of electric and solar batteries into South Africa, as well as the growth of battery assembly in the country, especially in the Western Cape.

These local events are happening in parallel with Africa-wide initiatives. The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) has prioritised the automotive sector and transport/logistics value chains. The African Association of Automotive Manufacturers (AAAM) is working with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) on a continent-wide strategy.

Certain African jurisdictions are incentivising electric vehicle and emobility development.

Rwanda has plans to phase in electric buses, cars and motorcycles, while the recent steps taken by Kenya are particularly noteworthy. Kenya has established an Emobility Taskforce, whose main objective will be to develop a National Electric Mobility Policy covering all modes of transport (road, air, rail and maritime) and drive uptake of emobility, create an enabling environment, recommend fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to promote import, local manufacture and assembly, provide a framework for the end of life and disposal, a framework for the development of carbon credits, creation of standards and measurement of impact on the economy and the environment.

Initially, EVs or emobility are more likely to find traction in public transport and two- to three-wheelers before wide-scale adoption by the automotive sector. The evolution will be different in each African jurisdiction. In South Africa, there may be greater potential in starting emobility in the public transport sector/ delivery sector, to meet a significant gap in the market.

There is a real opportunity for SA to help lead the emobility revolution in Africa, for several reasons. The continent urgently needs affordable and sustainable mobility solutions. The market for lithium battery cells could be met through local manufacturing since the continent possesses many of the necessary raw materials. South Africa has a mature automotive sector, including OEMs that export around the world, and it has signed various trade agreements that facilitate exports to Europe, such as the European Partnership Agreement (with the SADC) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (Agoa). In creating an EV export industry, South Africa can take advantage of the AfCFTA's rules of origin, where 40% of local content from Africa is under discussion.

By developing a multi-faceted emobility manufacturing sector, South Africa would help to speed its own transition to a greener future and meet its climate change goals; promote



Yael Shafrir, Associate Director at Webber Wentzel

industrialization in line with Africa's Agenda 2063 (the continent's blueprint for achieving inclusive and sustainable development over a 50-year period, with an emphasis on youth and women); and create jobs.

As South Africa transitions away from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, it would be able to participate in other parts of the value chain beyond car manufacture. There is an opportunity to manufacture the cells or batteries needed for EVs, and battery factories can stimulate local and regional economic growth. Battery factories could help to develop skills in engineering and attract talent to different regions where manufacturing takes place.

Of course, there are constraints on these plans. The most obvious in South Africa is the lack of access to uninterrupted energy sources. Another constraint is that it is difficult to raise seed capital for projects related to Environmental, Social and Governance improvement. More funding is needed in South Africa to support innovative startups.



Conducting a thorough analysis of scrap tyres and doing comprehensive fleet surveys can play a pivotal role in identifying the underlying reasons for tyre failures.



## THE POWER OF SURVEYS AND SCRAP TYRE ANALYSIS

**Commercial vehicle fleets are a significant investment, so it's essential to keep them running smoothly at all time, and tyres – as one of the most critical and costly components of a fleet – should be properly cared for and managed to prevent premature wear, costly downtime, and safety hazards.**

**L**ouis Marais, General Manager for Commercial Sales at Sumitomo Rubber South Africa, the manufacturer and distributor of the Dunlop, Sumitomo, and Falken tyre brands, says effective fleet tyre management goes beyond superficially inspecting worn-out tyres. "Conducting a thorough analysis of scrap tyres and doing comprehensive fleet surveys can play a pivotal role in identifying the

underlying reasons for tyre failures, optimising tyre performance, and ensuring the safety and profitability of your fleet," he says.

"This expertise can have a transformative impact on the business growth of commercial fleets, empowering owners and operators to take proactive steps to minimise tyre cost per kilometre (CPK) and improve safety," he adds.

### The nuts and bolts of fleet surveys

Marais recommends that every commercial fleet should prioritise an essential task, at least quarterly, by conducting a comprehensive examination of the entire fleet's tyres and vehicles. This crucial analysis yields valuable insights that can significantly impact the fleet's performance and budget.

"Conducting a thorough analysis of scrap tyres and doing comprehensive fleet surveys can play a pivotal role in identifying the underlying reasons for tyre failures, optimising tyre performance, and ensuring the safety and profitability of your fleet."

Louis Marais, General Manager for Commercial Sales at Sumitomo Rubber South Africa





Collaborating with an expert tyre partner empowers you to select tyres best suited to your fleet's specific requirements.



"By assessing the condition of the fleet as a whole, fleet surveys enable fleet managers to make informed decisions regarding tyre selection, maintenance practices, and overall fleet efficiency," says Marais.

A fleet survey is a thorough inspection of a fleet's tyres and generates a wealth of data regarding tyre wear patterns, tyre condition, tyre pressure, and vehicle performance. This data-driven approach empowers fleet managers to identify trends,

make evidence-based decisions, and tailor maintenance practices to specific vehicles or routes.

"An effective tyre survey includes keeping a record of essential parameters, such as tyre make, pattern, size, wheel position, tread depth, wear condition, valve cap status, odometer reading, air pressure and the basic mechanical condition of trailers that influence tyre performance. It involves assessing which tyres are performing

well, exhibiting the highest tread wear, and experiencing the least irregular wear, with the primary goal being uniform wear," explains Marais.

In cases of irregular wear conditions, such as fast shoulder wear, diagonal wipe-out wear, depressed wear, or alignment-related wear, further analysis is required to determine underlying causes.

Tyre wear patterns can indicate potential mechanical issues within the vehicles. Fleet surveys can help pinpoint irregularities in suspension systems, brakes, or steering components, thereby improving not just tyre performance but also the overall safety and reliability of the fleet. With safety being of paramount concern in the transportation industry, fleet surveys and regular tyre inspection can identify potential risks, such as sidewall cracks, punctures, and bulges, which might otherwise go unnoticed.

Additionally, factors such as missing valve caps, tyre pressures (whether too high or too low), and the performance of cheaper imported tyres compared to premium tyres are all scrutinised.

By leveraging the comprehensive information gathered during fleet surveys, fleet managers can work with their tyre partner to create customised maintenance plans that maximise tyre lifespan, identify areas for improvement, prevent breakdowns on the road, and reduce operational costs.

### Past performance for future decisions

The scrap tyre pile analysis is also a treasure trove of insights into the fleet's tyre efficiency, says Marais.

"Rather than discarding old or damaged tyres, a thorough analysis can reveal crucial information about tyre wear patterns and the causes of failures or premature tyre removal from the operation. By identifying these issues, fleet managers can take measures to address underlying problems and prevent future problems," he says.

Scrap tyre analysis involves inspecting tyres that have been removed from service to determine the cause of failure or damage, and doing so regularly can provide invaluable insights into the operational health of the fleet. This will ensure early detection of a problem in the fleet, route variations or underfoot condition changes along a route, which can then be managed accordingly, supporting the fleet manager in his quest to keep within his allowable tyre budget.

Common causes of tyre failures include overloading, underinflation, improper alignment, or uneven suspension, which can lead to accelerated tyre wear.

"Tyre failures due to operational damage can be hazardous and financially burdensome," says Marais.





Sumitomo Rubber SA understands the unique demands of commercial truck and bus fleets.

"By conducting a scrap tyre analysis, fleet managers can precisely identify the underlying causes of such failures, such as harsh driving practices, prolonged idling, or improper tyre inflation. Armed with this valuable information, they can make essential adjustments, including choosing more suitable tyre brands, implementing targeted driver training programmes, and enhancing preventive maintenance protocols," he adds.

### Partnering for success

In addition to fleet surveys and scrap tyre analysis, fleets can benefit from the expertise of an In-field Technical Services (ITS) team, accessible to their commercial operations and routes.

Sumitomo Rubber SA, for example, has an In-field Technical Services (ITS) team with a national presence, as well as in Africa. This division is dedicated to advising customers on tyre selection, application, and performance.

Says Marais, "ITS teams are typically composed of experienced tyre technicians who are familiar with the specific needs of commercial vehicle fleets. They can provide advice on tyre selection, application, and performance, and they can help fleets troubleshoot tyre problems."

The impact on business growth and enhanced fleet performance is substantial. For instance, the ITS team can recommend low rolling resistance tyres to boost fuel efficiency or suggest cost-effective tyres and retreading options to minimise tyre expenses effectively.

"One size does not fit all when it comes to



The impact on business growth and enhanced fleet performance is substantial.

tyres," says Marais. "Collaborating with an expert tyre partner empowers you to select tyres best suited to your fleet's specific requirements, operating conditions, vehicle types and applications. This optimised tyre selection translates into enhanced fuel efficiency, reduced downtime, and improved overall fleet performance."

### Invaluable expertise

Pieter Potgieter, Group Tyre Manager at Intercape, says, "Having access to the Sumitomo Rubber SA ITS team has helped us to improve our tyre management programme. We were facing recurring tyre failures, leading to unexpected downtime and increased operating cost. After consulting with the ITS team, we received valuable insights from the scrap tyre analysis and fleet surveys. We've been able to reduce our tyre costs significantly and improved our fuel efficiency in the fleet. Our tyre partner Willem Schoeman from IC Steel & Tyre also played a huge role in the success and keeping our passengers safe on our 155 coaches."

Martie Teubes, Procurement Manager at Tiptrans Cape, agrees. "Our fleet operates in diverse terrains and under challenging conditions. The expertise of the ITS team has been instrumental in selecting the right tyres for each application. Their proactive approach to fleet surveys and scrap tyre analysis has helped us identify potential issues before they become major problems, ensuring the safety of our drivers and cargo while maximising our tyre investment. We also value our tyre partner, Piet Brand from Moorreesburg Bande, in keeping our 59

truck tractors and 94 trailers safely on the road with his excellent service."

### Close relationships

Sumitomo Rubber SA's ITS teams work closely with fleet managers to understand their unique requirements and challenges. This personalised approach allows them to offer tailored solutions, helping clients select the most appropriate tyres and optimise tyre maintenance practices based on the specific needs of their fleet.

There's also continuous support and training. The ITS division doesn't just provide one-time advice; they offer ongoing guidance throughout the lifecycle of the tyres. This includes regular follow-ups, training programmes for drivers and maintenance staff, and updates on the latest tyre technologies and best practices.

### Tyres have unique demands

"As a commercial fleet owner or operator, your main priority is to ensure that your fleet remains operational, productive and efficient. Partnering with a tyre expert like Sumitomo Rubber South Africa provides the expertise to get the most out of your fleet's tyres and can empower you to make informed decisions with the aim of ensuring your fleet remains efficient, safe, and up to date with the latest tyre technology," says Marais.

Sumitomo Rubber SA understands the unique demands of commercial truck and bus fleets. The company offers a comprehensive range of truck and bus radial (TBR) tyres designed using advanced Japanese technology, tested against Africa's challenging road conditions, and manufactured in South Africa at a state-of-the-art purpose-built 180 000m<sup>2</sup> TBR factory in Ladysmith.

It also has a fast-growing Dunlop Commercial dealer footprint throughout the major cities and popular routes, to help with 24-hour breakdown support, new tyre sales and tyre retreading.

As business costs continue to rise, commercial transport companies are under increased pressure. The most successful and sustainable commercial fleet operations are those that tap into fleet surveys, scrap tyre analysis, and In-field Technical Services as an essential part of their fleet management programmes. 🌟

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# DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO INCREASE SUPPLY CHAIN ROI AND REAL-TIME TRANSPORT VISIBILITY

Leading transport and logistics organisations are working to advance traditional supply chain techniques and acquire a real-time perspective of transport and logistics in order to expand and stay profitable in this environment. According to Heinrich de Leeuw, Managing Director of SEIDOR in South Africa, by embracing digital technology and increasing the automation of company operations, they may gain a crucial advantage in a competitive market.

By Heinrich de Leeuw, Managing Director of SEIDOR in South Africa

**D**espite technological innovation, the disparity between potential and actual gains from supply chain digitisation can be blamed on the technology gap. De Leeuw offers some valuable insights into pertinent questions surrounding digitalisation.

## What are these technology gaps?

Bursts of innovation in the supply chain enabled companies to streamline routine processes, improve system capabilities and boost analytics. These gains were often followed by a lull, and that is why technology gaps occurred.

Advances in supply chain technology have been welcome and valuable, but they have not been transformative. True digital innovation has taken time and it is only more recently that we have seen the results accrue and come together to create transformative new solutions. These are enabling companies to make far greater improvements to the supply chain.

## Where in the supply chain do they exist?

In our experience, far too many South African SMBs continue to be unable to fully leverage the benefits of digital supply chain management because of inadequate access to the internet and digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas; lack of funding; limited access to effective solutions; or a lack of internal technological expertise.

Limited government support for digital innovation and a lack of investment in research and development further exacerbate the technology gap.

Without sufficient visibility across the extended supply network, companies are unable to see their risks. They don't have the systems to understand the status of their inventory, to project stock shortage of direct materials and optimise production, or to project stock shortages of finished goods to optimise customer allocation. They also lack the logistics flexibility they need

networks to ensure the profitable movement of goods.

Right now, supply chain leaders would be wise to quickly change how they do things if they want to overcome the challenges that arise from lack of visibility, collaboration, and coordination. The need for more automation and information is an opportunity for manufacturers.

## How are they impacting the implementation of a truly digital supply chain?

By adopting digital tech and accelerating automation of business processes, companies can gain a vital edge in a tough market. The pandemic showed how many businesses are vulnerable to global shocks through their supply chain relationships. It exposed weaknesses like long lead times, lack of visibility that leads to a higher risk of disruption, and the dangers of lack of diversification that come from excessive reliance on one location or supplier.

Technologies such as SAP Business One are available to improve visibility across the end-to-end supply chain and support greater supply chain agility and resilience. By adopting digital tech and accelerating automation of business processes, companies can gain a vital edge in a tough market.

Digital supply networks like these are being built and designed to anticipate disruptions and reconfigure themselves appropriately to lessen the impact of events. They will enable the digital supply networks of the future, regardless of industry sector.

## Can these gaps be filled (and by what technology)?

Seidor Africa, which represents SAP Business One in South Africa, can enable companies to build a more productive and data-led business.

The technology closes the identified gaps in three key ways:

- Businesses gain access to the real-



Heinrich de Leeuw, Managing Director of SEIDOR in South Africa.

time, reliable information they require to align components such as stock levels (in-stock and on order) with customer orders (current & back-order) and accurate delivery schedules.

- Businesses move from a reactive, back-capture methodology to continuous manufacturing processes where material consumption, stage updates and quality control data are entered real-time on the production floor to aid accurate stock management, replenishment, and efficient order fulfilment. Continuous manufacturing and electronic tracking are also key to identifying any potential inefficiencies in certain production lines or phases of production.
- Providing sales reps with the ability to view pricing, stock availability and place orders in real time from their mobile phones or tablets while in the field or with a customer, through SAP B1 Mobile Sales application integrated to SAP Business One. Having these orders added to the manufacturing and subsequent delivery cycle automatically, provides an invaluable advantage for businesses in the supply chain industry. 🌟



A range of Hino Trucks during the media launch this year.



# HINO SOUTH AFRICA TAKES BIG LEAPS

**As 2023 is speeding into its fourth quarter, so is Hino South Africa. Locally, the company has a lot to celebrate.**

**From a new vice president to a re-entering into the heavy truck segment in South Africa.**

## TALKING POINT



"The most significant growth has been observed in the EHCV (Extra Heavy Commercial Vehicle) segment, with a staggering 21.8% increase compared to 2022. This indicates a substantial demand for large-scale transportation of goods in South Africa."

**Anton Falck, Vice President of Hino South Africa**

**T**oyota South Africa Motors (TSAM) introduced Anton Falck, the recently appointed Vice President of Hino South Africa in June this year.

Leon Theron, Senior Vice President – Toyota South Africa Motors (TSAM) introduced Falck to mark the return of Hino to the extra-heavy segment of the local truck market.

Falck took the over from Ernie Trautmann, who has retired.

"I am honoured to have been granted this rare opportunity to head up, what we believe to be an important truck brand in South Africa and to ensure that Hino makes a valuable contribution to the local economy," says Falck.

"We are pleased to have successfully launched the highly anticipated Hino 700. This vehicle sets a new standard for its class in the industry, boasting exceptional performance and outstanding safety features at a highly competitive price. The product has been well received

and the initial feedback from both our dealer network and customers has been overwhelmingly positive.

"We are aggressively promoting the Hino 700 and anticipate that over the next few years, the Hino 700 will help us establish a strong presence in the extra-heavy segment, where we have not played a significant role previously," commented Falck.

### The new 700-series

Hino South Africa wrapped up the local launch of its new 700-Series trucks recently.

The company views the series as an important new competitor in the extra-extra heavy segment of the market. This segment is responsible for 60% of truck sales in South Africa.

During the launch, the model range of four models was represented with various bodies and trailers suited to specific operations.

The models include a tipper, flatbed freight carrier, and cattle truck, while

several truck-tractors can be connected to a side-tip, tanker, double dropside trailer, and a flatbed trailer.

### The best truck for SA

"This is the first full model change of the 700 Series in South Africa in the past seven years, and we believe the latest model will be very well accepted by our existing and new customers as the main aims of the latest redesign have been to lower total operating costs while further improving Hino's proven reputation for quality, reliability and durability," said Masato Uchida, General Manager for Overseas Marketing at HML.

Uchida stressed that Hino South Africa is an important member of the global Hino family, which now extends to 90 countries, with the South African company consistently in the global top 10 in terms of sales.

"Although the 700 has a host of new, electronic safety features, it sticks to relevant technology in terms of the drivetrain, which ensures its suitability for African conditions," explains.

"For instance, the basic 13-litre engine turbo diesel engine has been retained, but it has been specially adapted for the new 700 with flat power and torque curves, as well as improved fuel economy."

According to him, driver comfort was also a key concern of the design team, extending to Hino developing a 10-way adjustable, air-suspended driver's seat with the seat belt attached to the seat instead of the cab body as in the past.

The new 700 has a significant array of



The Hino production plant team members enjoyed the ceremonial line-off ceremony for the new Hino 700-Series extra heavy truck.



The ceremonial line-off ceremony at the Hino production plant in Prospecton this year included a ribbon cutting.

active and passive safety features, which include a system of rear-view mirrors that eliminate all blind spots.

### A great drive

The newcomer is the first Hino to provide the driver with a choice of three driving modes – Eco to save fuel, Power for passing other traffic or climbing steep gradients, and then Normal provides a balance between the two previously mentioned modes.

There is a warning system to warn the driver when he or she is accelerating unnecessarily, delaying upshifts or overspeeding, as well as allowing the engine to idle excessively, such as when stuck in a traffic jam.

All models except the tipper have built-in ZF intertarders that operate in conjunction with the standard engine brake to slow the truck, when necessary, without the need to apply the brakes. When these two systems

are used correctly and intelligently then brake lining life can be extended to last as long as 600 000 km before requiring replacement.

### Attractive after-sales

The after-sales back-up for the 700-Series is comprehensive and the standard warranties can be extended at reasonable cost. Service intervals of up to 40,000 kilometres are possible depending on operating conditions.

Servicing is standardised and the same tasks will be carried out by all the 65 Hino dealers in South Africa, with the only variance being the labour rate in each area. A standard service plan is available that works out at a cost-per-kilometre of only 37 cents over 480 000 km, with the aim of providing operators with known fixed operating costs.

There is a standard 3-year/unlimited

distance warranty on the drivetrain, with the option of extending this warranty for a further two years with unlimited kilometers.

### Market forecast

Falck says the company's initial commercial market forecast for 2023 was around 31,500 units. However, after seven months of sales, it has become evident that the market is larger than anticipated, with an impressive growth rate of 11.6% over 2022.

Taking this into account, Hino SA expects the total commercial vehicle market to range between 33,500 and 35,000 units this year.

"The exact figure will depend on market and consumer response to the increased interest rates, the declining exchange rate, and various other challenges we are currently facing as South Africans. Despite the challenges, the deteriorating state of other forms of transportation, such as the railways, suggests that demand for trucks will be strong for the next few years," adds Falck.

"The most significant growth has been observed in the EHCV (Extra Heavy Commercial Vehicle) segment, with a staggering 21.8% increase compared to 2022. This indicates a substantial demand for large-scale transportation of goods in South Africa. On the other hand, the MCV (Medium Commercial Vehicle) and HCV (Heavy Commercial Vehicle) segments have remained relatively stable."

According to him, Hino sales have performed satisfactorily year-to-date, with a growth rate of 5.8% compared to 2022. While this is behind the market growth, the company believes its lull has been due to a product gap in the extra-heavy segment.

### Safeguarding the segment

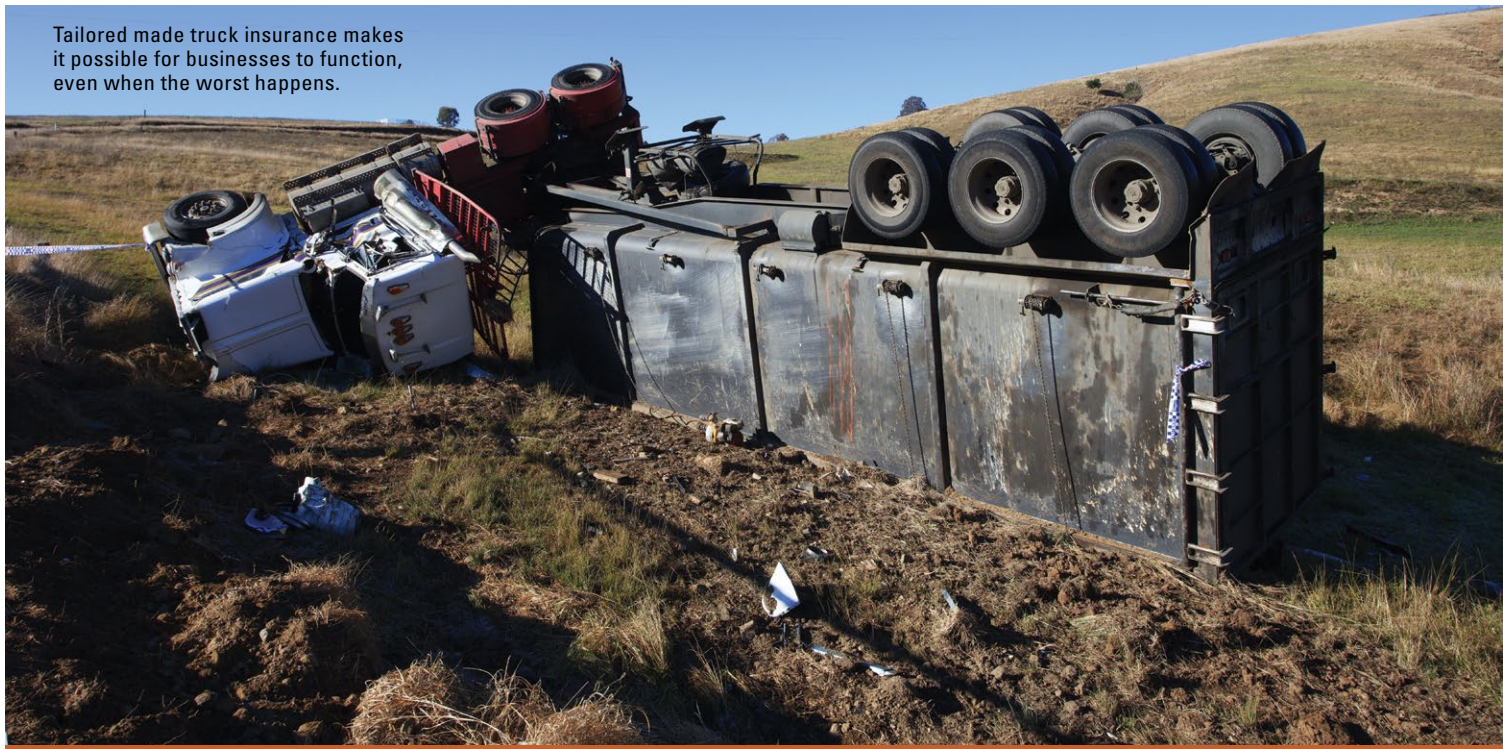
Hino Motors, Toyota, Mitsubishi Fuso, and Daimler recently signed a memorandum of understanding to engage in a future collaboration on equal terms, with Toyota and Daimler as shareholders. The objective between the four parties is to accelerate product development in respect of CASE, which stands for Connected, Autonomous, Shared and Electric trucks.

The deal is set for completion by the end of 2024 and, while the local Hino distributor voiced enthusiasm for the expected future opportunities to flow from the announced collaboration, no further details are available at this time.

"The current market trends and our successes indicate a promising future for Hino in South Africa. We are confident that our reliable trucks and competitive pricing, coupled with our strong dealer network and aftersales support efforts, will position us favourably in the southern African commercial vehicle market going forward," says Falck. 🌟



Tailored made truck insurance makes it possible for businesses to function, even when the worst happens.



## MAKE TRUCK INSURANCE **YOUR LANGUAGE**

**In a world increasingly dominated by digital interactions and artificial intelligence, where personal connections are often overshadowed by automated processes, Hollard Insurance has launched a new campaign celebrating the power of local expertise and personal relationships in the insurance industry.**

**T**itled *We Are Where You Are*, Hollard Insurance's latest campaign, launched in June this year, emphasises the importance of on-the-ground relationships, especially when it comes to addressing the unique insurance needs of South African trucks, fleets, and business owners.

### **Local solutions for local challenges**

This campaign, unveiled in Johannesburg, underscores the vital role of broker partnerships and localised insurance solutions tailored to the specific challenges faced by diverse regions and communities across South Africa. Nash Omar, CEO of Hollard Insure, highlights the insurer's commitment to personal interaction amid the technological advancements in the industry. "In the face of unprecedented challenges over the last three years, we've proven the resilience of our industry, thanks in part to the invaluable contributions of brokers," noted Omar.

"Our industry thrives on personal connections, and brokers have been instrumental in reshaping the way we work."

### **Fostering human relationships**

Abdul Ebrahim, Head of the Johannesburg

Region at Hollard, emphasises the importance of understanding local communities and their unique risk challenges. He stresses the significance of meeting customers where they are, both geographically and culturally, as an essential element in providing exceptional service.

Ebrahim explains, "Every region has its distinct community, risk challenges, and solutions. This includes understanding the language of the industry-specific to your region."

### **Trucking insurance**

One such community in South Africa is the trucking industry, which plays a pivotal role in the nation's economy by connecting communities and transporting goods across vast distances.

However, this sector faces its own set of challenges, from the wear and tear of long-haul journeys to unpredictable road conditions and unforeseen accidents.

This is where trucking insurance becomes not merely a necessity but a lifeline for the industry, and Hollard Insurance aims to bolster these critical partnerships to safeguard the economy's vital sector.

"At the end of the day, business is conducted between people," says Pierre

Geyer, Hollard's Managing Executive for Regions and Trucking.

That is why the campaign is impactful, because it aligns their insurance offering with where clients are based, and within each unique industry they cover.

### **Understanding the trucking insurance**

Hollard's approach to trucking insurance is far from one-size-fits-all. Recognising the diversity within the trucking industry, with various vehicle types, cargo specifications, and routes, Hollard offers a range of insurance solutions that can be customised to suit the distinct needs of different trucking and fleet businesses across South Africa.

**Fleet insurance:** For trucking companies operating multiple vehicles, fleet insurance provides comprehensive coverage. Hollard understands that managing a fleet comes with its unique set of challenges, from vehicle maintenance to driver safety. Fleet insurance extends coverage not only to the vehicles themselves but also to the cargo they transport, ensuring comprehensive protection against various risks.

**Cargo Insurance:** Cargo is the lifeblood of the trucking industry, and its secure transport is paramount. Hollard offers cargo insurance to safeguard goods in



Some brokers at the launch of the campaign.

TALKING POINT



"Our industry thrives on personal connections, and brokers have been instrumental in reshaping the way we work."

Nash Omar, CEO of Hollard Insure

QUICK TAKE

The 'We Are Where You Are' campaign celebrates personal connections and local expertise in the South African insurance industry.

Trucking insurance at Hollard is customised to meet the unique needs of South African trucking and fleet businesses.

Brokers possess local knowledge, ensuring that insurance policies are tailored to specific regions and communities.

The campaign underscores the invaluable role of personal relationships and localised expertise in the insurance realm.



transit against theft, damage, or loss. This coverage is essential for both trucking companies and cargo owners, ensuring that valuable goods reach their destinations intact.

**Public liability insurance:** Accidents can occur on the road, and when they do, they may involve third parties. Public liability insurance from Hollard shields trucking businesses from the financial implications of legal claims and compensation demands arising from accidents or incidents involving their vehicles.

**Specialised coverage:** The trucking industry is multifaceted, with various niches such as refrigerated transport, hazardous materials, and oversized cargo. Hollard offers specialized coverage tailored to the unique risks associated with these segments of the industry.

### The power of knowledge

When addressing the unique needs of trucking businesses, it is imperative to collaborate closely with brokers who possess an in-depth understanding of the trucking industry in specific regions.

This ensures that insurance policies are not only tailored to the business's needs but also take into account local factors that can impact coverage.

Michelle Wedderburn of Broker Solutions Group emphasises the importance of localised knowledge and a deep connection with the community in the insurance industry.

"Speaking your language means meeting you where you are now – from handling a minor motor claim to uniting communities after a catastrophe – to build better futures for our customers. It means we speak Agriculture, Marine, Equipage, Travel, Construction and Engineering. More than that, it means we work with brokers who make it their business to know our customers' business," she says.

"Insurance is the heartbeat of every industry, and in a turbulent world, it is physical partnerships that are crucial, being part of a bigger community. Whether you're in Nelspruit or in the bustling streets of Jozi, a one-size-fits-all approach simply won't do, as the needs of communities and brokers vary from region to region," Omar concludes.

In a rapidly evolving world, commitment to understanding the unique challenges faced by trucking businesses and their dedication to providing tailored insurance solutions make them a trusted partner in safeguarding this vital sector. Whether you're hauling goods across the nation or navigating the diverse landscapes of South Africa, the right coverage for your trucking needs will make you go the distance. 🌟





## DIGITALISATION PROTECTS ASSETS

**In the rapidly evolving landscape of asset management, the key to longevity and cost-effectiveness lies in regular maintenance. Technical studies have consistently shown that proper and timely maintenance significantly extends the lifespan of assets and results in substantial savings for asset owners. Conversely, neglecting assets due to poor management can lead to revenue loss and reputational damage.**

**C**itadel House of Technologies, in recognition of these challenges, has unveiled Fortress Solutions, a powerful and cost-effective digital project and asset management solution (AMS).

Fortress Solutions is set to redefine the way organisations manage projects and assets throughout their lifecycle, with a focus on achieving sustainable operational excellence, after launching in South Africa this month.

### Digital solutions to close the gap

Within the realm of Asset Management Systems (AMS), there is a noticeable scarcity of software tools geared towards proactive asset management. This gap forces many companies to rely on reactive maintenance strategies. Fortress Solutions, developed by Citadel House of Technologies, has set out to address the gap by offering a proactive approach to asset management. According to Nyiko Chabalala, a Research and

Development Engineer at Citadel House of Technologies, "Numerous technical studies reveal that maintaining assets on a regular basis results in a substantially longer lifespan of the asset, and in addition, if the maintenance is carried out at optimal intervals, this results in much more cost-effective maintenance, resulting in substantial savings for the owner of the asset. Deterioration of assets due to poor asset and project management results in revenue loss and ultimately reputational damage."

### Project management

In the world of asset management and maintenance, project management plays an integral role. Every new contract undertaken by management or maintenance practitioners undergoes a meticulous project management process, from initiation to the asset's final handover to the client. Fortress Solutions sets itself apart by seamlessly integrating project management into its operational

framework.

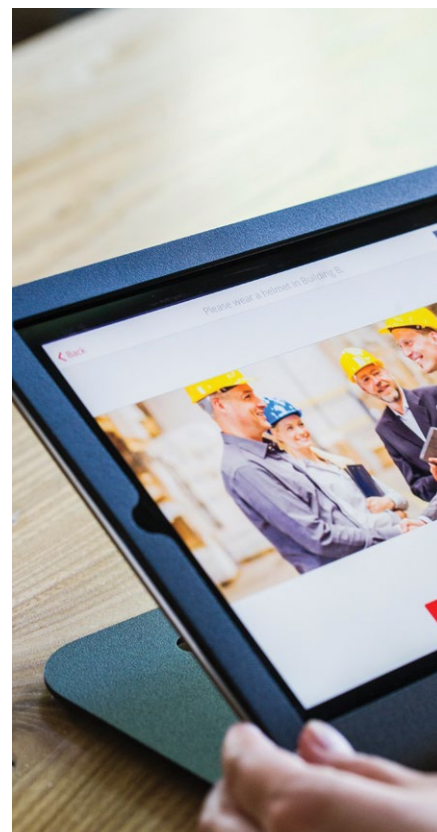
At the core of Fortress Solutions is a comprehensive seven-stage lifecycle management process, with a particular focus on operations management.

This holistic approach aims to address the critical need for practitioners to manage projects and assets throughout their entire lifecycle. The seven stages encompass Inception, Concept and Viability, Design Development, Documentation and Procurement, Contract Administration and Inspection, Close-Out, and Operations Management.

### Asset lifecycles

The asset lifecycle commences with planning, a mission-critical function for organisations striving to maximise productivity.

Fortress Solutions guides organisations through the intricacies of a seven-stage procedure, which includes Inception, Concept and Viability, Design Development, Documentation and



"With a bigger focus on asset maintenance and replacement planning, Fortress combines the planning and acquisition activities of the asset lifecycle into a single module."

Funmilayo Soluade, Director at Citadel

The Asset Maintenance module of Fortress Solutions equips organizations with the essential functionalities required to process maintenance-related activities on assets.

## TALKING POINT



Procurement, Contract Administration and Inspection, Close-Out, and Operations Management.

This meticulous process ensures that organizations maintain an optimal number of assets in operation, thereby enhancing productivity.

### Asset maintenance

Within the Fortress Solutions framework, the Asset Maintenance module stands as a cornerstone, providing essential functionalities for processing maintenance-related activities on assets.

These functionalities encompass defining maintenance schedules, creating and assigning maintenance tasks, monitoring progress, and ensuring timely job completion. Moreover, the module serves as the repository for all financial transactions related to assets. This feature facilitates well-informed decision-making regarding Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operational Expenditure (OPEX) planning.

### Data-Driven decision making

Fortress Solutions empowers decision-makers with real-time, accurate data. A dedicated reporting module, equipped with a dashboard that monitors vital asset management Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), provides at-a-glance insights.

Additionally, the system offers a comprehensive list of pre-built report templates and user-friendly functionalities for data interaction, such as filtering and slicing.

### Mastering the digital game

By harnessing the capabilities of Fortress Solutions, organisations can ensure effective inventory management, efficient maintenance processes, streamlined operations, and holistic lifecycle planning.

As Funmilayo Soluade notes, "With a bigger focus on asset maintenance and replacement planning, Fortress combines the planning and acquisition activities of the asset lifecycle into a single module. These activities include, but are not limited to, vendor and service provider engagement, procurement planning, asset class definition management, and asset register management."

### Charting a path

The journey through the asset lifecycle begins with meticulous planning. Adequate provision must be made to ensure that organizations maintain the necessary assets in operation to maximize productivity continually.

This initial step paves the way for effective asset management. The Asset Maintenance module of Fortress Solutions

equips organisations with the essential functionalities required to process maintenance-related activities on assets. This includes defining maintenance schedules, creating and assigning tasks, monitoring progress, and ensuring timely completion.

### Global expansion

The launch of Fortress Solutions in the South African market is just the beginning. Citadel House of Technologies has plans to introduce this groundbreaking solution to international markets, including Mauritius, Canada, and the USA. As organisations around the world seek ways to enhance their asset management practices and achieve sustainable operational excellence, Fortress Solutions promises to be a transformative force in the realm of digital asset management.

By providing a proactive approach to asset maintenance and offering comprehensive lifecycle management capabilities, Fortress Solutions is poised to revolutionise the way organisations manage their projects and assets. As it embarks on its journey into international markets, the global business landscape is set to witness a paradigm shift in the pursuit of sustainable operational excellence. 🌟



## PDS/CAS flexibility and options for Bell ADTs

South African equipment manufacturer, Bell Equipment, reports an influx of enquiries from local mining customers wanting articulated dump trucks (ADTs) that can be fitted with proximity detection systems (PDS) and collision avoidance systems (CAS) following new mining regulations that came into effect in December 2022.

In terms of the regulations, diesel-powered, trackless mobile machines must be able to automatically detect the presence of pedestrians and other diesel-powered, trackless mobile machines in the vicinity, and provide an effective warning. Where no action is taken to prevent a potential collision, the machine must be able to “fail to safe” without human intervention by means of a system that has the means to retard the machine to a safe speed whereafter the brakes are autonomically applied.

Bell Equipment OEM Product Manager, Jeremiah Mokhomo, says: “Our Pin 3 E-series ADTs, introduced towards the end of 2020, are built ready to integrate with a wide range of proximity detection systems (PDS) or collision avoidance systems (CAS) up to level 9. This was a natural progression for Bell because our earlier E-series trucks introduced huge advances in automation to offer industry-leading levels of driver and machine protection.

Standard features such as starting,



The inside of an ADT cabin.

daily checks, bin tipping, and switch off/turn spin down have been automated, and the horn is automated to sound upon vehicle start-up and when selecting forward or reverse. In addition to automatic speed control and retardation, the ADTs are fitted with automatic traction control.”

Explaining the difference between PDS and CAS, and how a Bell ADT integrates with a third-party system, he says: “PDS improves the operator’s awareness by detecting potential collision threats and warning the operator visually and audibly, whereas CAS intervenes by either slowing the vehicle down or stopping it to prevent or at least reduce the severity of colli-

sions between equipped vehicles and equipped pedestrians.

“Bell provides a PDS gateway controller (ISO 21815-2) for a PDS/CAS to connect to a Bell ADT. The third-party PDS/CAS then does the detection and gives commands while the execution of these commands and the control of the truck is Bell Equipment’s responsibility.”

According to Jeremiah, because Bell Equipment’s ADT innovation has been steadily moving towards PDS/CAS, older trucks from the D-series Pin 4 can be retrofitted with a PDS aftermarket kit. This enables customers to fit a PDS or CAS into an existing truck at a fraction of the cost of a new PDS/CAS-ready machine. 🌟

## Innovation will take centre stage at Mining Indaba 2024

To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of African Mining Indaba there will be a shift in conversations during the 2024 iteration of the event.

The 2024 theme: “Embracing the power of positive disruption: A bold new future for African mining” represents this objective. It outlines the need for Africa’s mining industry to embrace change in order to become a meaningful global competitor as key minerals are required to drive a sustainable future for the planet.

“Disruption means many things to various sub-sectors of industry, and Mining Indaba wants to explore this theme on every level. Ultimately, we want to disrupt traditional thinking around processes and conversations and explore what our industry truly needs to resolve challenges,” says Laura Cornish, Head of Content at Mining Indaba.

According to her the team behind the event wants to deliver content that does not shy away from the difficult questions.

“We want the industry to share in this vision and showcase how they are disrupting

our industry to achieve a brighter future. Technology is required to achieve this, but so are ideas and thoughts around changing most conventional approaches to health and safety, exploration, beneficiation, the workforce, our future generation, and so much more,” says Cornish.

Next year offers the opportunity to be bold and daring and to shift the conversation, and next year only represents the start of this new journey. Mining Indaba consists of five days (including the Ministerial Symposium on Sunday) where all strategic and influential stakeholders – including governments, the private sector, investors and disruptive services providers – gather to network and exchange ideas that will propel their businesses forward.

The event has evolved over the years to include a variety of content streams and



A scene from this year’s Mining Indaba.

special sessions addressing diverse subjects of relevance in addition to unveiling this year’s programmes that will support the theme of the event.

“Mining Indaba is addressing its content and position with more robustness than ever before, urging the mining industry to dig deeper to identify widespread answers to the sector’s existing difficulties,” concludes Cornish. 🌟

## Safeguarding mines against illegal mining with shaft capping

Illegal mining activities pose a growing risk to redundant mine shafts, especially with the Witwatersrand Basin's history of gold production. Specialist contractor Jet Demolition has stepped in to seal these shafts permanently below natural ground level (NGL) to prevent unauthorised access and enhance safety.

"Compliance with regulations, environmental considerations, and safety measures are top priorities in our turnkey service offering to the mining industry," says Kate Bester, Contracts and Project Manager at Jet Demolition.

Redundant mine shafts become prime targets for illegal miners, who risk their lives underground in search of unmined material and valuable infrastructure components like copper cable and steel.

To combat the growing threat of illegal mining and secure redundant shafts, Jet Demolition offers a comprehensive turnkey service to the mining industry. The process involves backfilling shaft barrels, designing permanent caps, and installing them at defined depths below NGL. It also records the final position and depth of the caps before backfilling and reinstating the natural material over them.

Interconnected shafts add complexity to the sealing process, necessitating a thorough understanding of the network to prevent adverse effects on miners in neighbouring shafts. Compliance with the Mine Health and Safety Act and the Department of Mineral Resources regulations, along with client-specific requirements, is vital for any permanent shaft



To prevent unauthorised access, Jet Demolition plays a crucial role in permanently sealing mine shafts

sealing project.

Jet Demolition takes environmental considerations seriously, especially in managing natural water courses and stormwater flow. Careful rerouting of water courses ensures no downstream negative impact while using clean and uncontaminated materials for backfilling prevents groundwater contamination after sealing. In certain instances, Jet Demolition seals shafts equipped with monitoring access points for Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) projects in the Witwatersrand Goldfields. These access points are used to monitor the quality and

volume of subsurface water in the future.

Working over open shafts is inherently risky, but Jet Demolition prioritizes health and safety. Certified lifelines are installed to safeguard personnel and equipment from potential falls, and the use of larger machines with increased reach further enhances safety measures during the capping process. "Our commitment to sealing mine shafts with precision, adherence to regulations, and a focus on safety all play a vital role in safeguarding mines against the scourge of illegal mining activities," concludes Bester. 🌀

## Mining school opens in the Northern Cape

The Copper 360 (AltX CPR) School of Mining debuted its first set of courses at its Concordia operation in the Northern Cape. The company announced the development of the training facility in August.

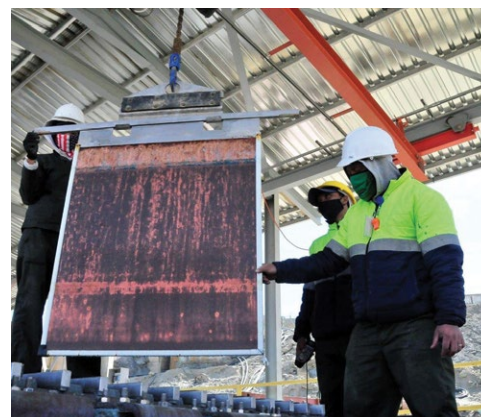
The school will launch with seven courses: Basic Surface Geology, Sampling, Ore Body Technician, Mineral Resource Management, Drone Technology, Introduction to Mining Law and Urban Design for Mining Communities. Thirty students were accepted at its first intake for the series of unaccredited courses including women and persons with disabilities.

"The initial course offering will focus on developing practical knowledge for students," said Copper 360 executive director Quinton Adams, who heads up the firm's community engagement arm. "Skills development will initially be based on the needs of the company, whereafter, as the school grows, a wider net will be cast."

The courses were developed in-house, and the company has sourced experienced geologists and other mining professionals to contribute to and present the material. A further three hundred staff members have enrolled in an extended apprenticeship programme that will be simultaneously rolled out. Personnel will also enjoy access to School of Mining courses.

The Northern Cape, with its mostly untapped natural resources, will be the next mineral province and economic driver of the country, said Adams. But unemployment is at near sixty percent in some areas and poverty widespread.

While the school's first courses are unaccredited and Copper 360 needs-based, Adams noted that accredited courses as well as diploma and degree fields of study are on the near-term horizon, including an association with the



Some of the students at the facility.

Camborne School of Mines in the United Kingdom.

Adams said that he expects the School of Mining to contribute substantially to the nurturing of human capital as the minerals boom takes shape in the province. 🌀



## Werner Pumps accredited by Scania South Africa

Werner Pumps South Africa has received accreditation as a body-builder by Scania South Africa for its locally manufactured high-pressure vacuum and jetting trucks.

Theuns Naude, Pre-Sales Engineer for waste, fire and special vehicles at Scania SA, says there are very few vacuum and jetting builders in South Africa that are ISO9001 accredited.

"There are also just a few in South Africa that can build these units of such a quality that they can compete against their European counterparts. Werner Pumps manufactures trucks of export quality," he says.

According to him, his division is responsible for looking after the waste segment, which includes waste compactors, skip loaders, hook lifts, vacuum and jetting trucks, fire trucks and specialised vehicles.

"For us at Scania South Africa, it is very important to get the maximum market share and exposure in this segment. Thus, the decision to add another world-class body-builder to our suppliers list was a

no-brainer."

Sebastian Werner, MD at Werner Pumps, says the accreditation by a global company offering sales of trucks, buses, and services in more than 100 countries worldwide is a major win for the company.

"Scania is a world-leading provider of transport solutions and also offers vehicle financing, insurance, and rental services to its customers. Their accreditation of our truck units opens new markets to us and allows them to increase their customer offering, so this is a positive development for all parties," he says.

Naude adds that Scania South Africa is also in discussions with Werner Pumps to introduce them to global Scania markets to pursue export opportunities.

"We're looking forward to working with Werner Pumps, now and in the future, showing the world that there is very good quality that is available out of South Africa that can compete against European suppliers," he says.

Werner Pumps offers a full range of



Werner Pumps offers a full range of high-pressure jetting and vacuuming trucks.

high-pressure jetting and vacuuming equipment, from small trailer- and skid-mounted units to industrial truck-mounted vacuum, jetting, combination and recycling units. With a national presence and the capability to service neighbouring countries, the company has been leading the local manufacture of high-pressure jetting and vacuuming equipment for more than 35 years. 🌐

## Volvo's most-sold truck celebrates 30 years of innovation

It's been 30 years since Volvo Trucks introduced the Volvo FH, the company's best-selling truck ever. From its start, Volvo's flagship model has been characterised by its distinctive exterior and interior design, superb driver comfort and technically advanced efficiency and safety solutions.

Volvo FH is one of the industry's most successful models ever with nearly 1.4 million trucks sold, in around 80 markets all over the world. New from the wheels up, offering excellent driveability and fuel efficiency, the Volvo FH quickly came to represent a completely new standard in truck driving when it was launched in 1993. Thirty years later, Volvo FH is truly iconic.

The Volvo FH series has been a favourite among truck drivers for many years, especially for those who spend a good portion of their lives on the road.

In South Africa, FH has been sold locally since 1994, with more than 25 550 units sold to date. Since June this year, the FH is also available as an electric truck model locally.

"Volvo FH is the perfect representation of a customer-focused mindset and a model that has been pushing the boundaries globally for 30 years. In all crucial areas like driver comfort, fuel efficiency, safety and productivity, we have never stopped improving this truck," says Waldemar Christensen, MD of Volvo Trucks South Africa.

"We are also very proud to have been



Two Volvo FH trucks on the road.

assembling this range at our Durban plant since 2006."

Volvo FH has been and remains an innovation leader. It was launched with a totally new chassis, using a design that facilitated flexible solutions for different transport applications. The groundbreaking drive-line had a completely new 12-litre engine (16-litre for the Volvo FH16) and the all-new cab offered outstanding aerodynamics and driver comfort.

The innovations have continued through the years, always with Volvo's values of safety, quality and care for the environment as the starting point. Innovation milestones over the past three decades include the driver's airbag, the automated gearbox

solution I-Shift and Volvo Dynamic Steering, which provides effortless steering and great manoeuvrability.

"The first-generation Volvo FH was a game changer that totally transformed the concept of a modern truck. Since then, we have continued to set new standards in trucking and launched five further generations of this truck," says Christensen.

"We believe that our success formula has been to make use of the very latest technology in a way that always adds clear benefits for our customers and drivers. As proof of our successful continuous improvement efforts and constant evolution, the Volvo FH is the only truck that has been selected 'International Truck of the Year' three times." 🌐

## Best practices to maintain smooth supply chains

Disruption has become the norm in today's global supply chains with various challenges impacting the efficiency and reliability of logistical operations.

South African organisations must embrace a proactive mindset and develop robust strategies to deal effectively with disruption in this ever-evolving landscape.

The logistics industry is no stranger to disruptive events, ranging from global pandemics and natural disasters to trade disputes, energy shortages, and labour complexities.

Realising the significance of having a resilient supply chain, leading logistics providers like Rhenus have taken strategic steps to minimise disruptions and ensure seamless operations for their clients.

This includes leveraging advanced technologies to optimise supply chain visibility, enabling real-time tracking and monitoring of shipments.

"This level of transparency empowers clients with actionable insights, allowing them to manage potential disruptions and make informed decisions proactively," says Rhenus South Africa Regional Director Kishore Kanayelal.



Kishore Kanayelal,  
Rhenus South Africa  
Regional Director.

In addition, logistics companies understand the importance of strong partnerships and collaboration. Acknowledging that disruption is inevitable, it is how it is dealt with that sets companies apart. By working closely with third-party service providers and fostering out-of-the-box thinking, the logistics industry has maintained supply chain integrity and provides exceptional service to its clients through challenging times.

Taking a proactive approach to disruption by investing in staff, developing agile processes, and constantly reviewing practices are just as important.

"It's the capability of an organisation to work around disruptions and maintain uninterrupted supply chains that is the differentiating factor. Disruptions in the logistics industry can have severe consequences for businesses," he says.

"Our focus on technology, risk management, and collaboration sets us apart and contributes to delivering exceptional value to our clients. Ongoing investments in infrastructure, including the construction of sustainable warehouses, drive operational continuity and supports commercial success," says Kanayelal. 🌟

## A fleet is only as strong as its tyres

Goodyear's KMAX S ENDURANCE tyre fitted on the steer position of All Bulk's fleet helped the carrier achieve higher operating efficiency.

Johannesburg, South Africa, 24 August 2023 – Founded in 2011, All Bulk is a leading transportation company that specialises in dry bulk transportation within South Africa and Africa.

To ensure that it stays on track to achieve operational and business goals, All Bulk decided on Goodyear's KMAX S ENDURANCE tyres to be fitted onto the steer position of its fleet for regional haulage. And the tyres lived up to their promise – they clocked more than 240,000kms over 14 months of use.

An innovative steer tyre, Goodyear's KMAX S ENDURANCE is manufactured with a specific compound mix that uses ingredients and a molecular structure designed to minimise wear and maximize resistance. Fully designed with an optimised footprint to handle the different forces, such as the lateral force, that are simultaneously exerted on steer tyres during the journey, the KMAX S ENDURANCE is able to achieve high mileage and even wear over the period of usage.

Louis Slabbert, Transport Manager,

All Bulk says: "The Goodyear KMAX S ENDURANCE tyres were fitted onto the steer position of our fleet of Scania R500. These tyres have done over 240,000kms and enabled us to achieve higher efficiency per kilometre and lower downtime. We are satisfied with their performance."

In addition to the tyres, Goodyear also upskilled the All Bulk team with fitter and driver training.

Brandon Meyer, Director of Commercial Business, Goodyear South Africa says: "Goodyear has a proud track record of delivering high-quality tyres to South African fleets, which enable the delivery of goods to every corner of this country."

"With key tyre technology innovations that combine chipping/chunking resistance and robustness, with high mileage capability and even wear, the KMAX S ENDURANCE is the perfect steer tyre for regional hauling applications."

Every tyre in Goodyear's KMAX ENDURANCE range is designed for optimal mileage and reliability for different on-road conditions and is available through its distributor, Exclusive Wheel and Tyre Distributors. 🌟



The KMAX S endurance tyre.



# WHAT THE HIGH DIESEL PRICE MEANS FOR THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

**This month the cost of diesel for transporters increased by R2,76 for 500ppm (R2,84 for 50ppm). That raised inland pump prices to R23,05 and R23,28 respectively. The price of both grades of petrol - 93 and 95 - increased by R1,71 cents per litre.**

By Gavin Kelly, Chief Executive Officer of The Road Freight Association

**T**he Central Energy Fund (CEF) attributed the price hikes to rising international fuel prices and the weakened Rand.

These prices were last seen in June 2022, the first in a four month climb that saw diesel prices reach the lofty heights of R25,74 in November 2022. July 2022 had also reached R25 per litre.

Road freight transporters use both petrol and diesel – but diesel is the main fuel in most road operations. Once fuel prices increase, transporters will need to increase their pricing to cover the increased cost of diesel. Whilst this sounds like an “easy” or simple process, there will be transporters who will not be able to increase costs (either they are contractually bound or they just price themselves out of the market), and thus might not be able to carry on running the business.

One of the biggest challenges faced by transporters is the need to fund operations (the use of fuel) whilst only being paid months after the work has been done – in some cases up to three months afterwards. In the meantime, the next load needs to be moved, and so on, and that all needs fuel for the vehicles. There just aren’t limitless reserves of cash to continue the high level of fuel expenditure against the delayed payment for work already done.

The Road Freight Association (RFA) is hearing from more and more of its Members how the fuel cost strain is affecting survival – with more and more businesses in stress / business rescue, whilst customers reduce volumes that need to be transported or even curtail stock movement (depending on consumer consumption levels).

Transporters will feel this impact on their businesses. Many transporters will not be able to muster the guarantees required for purchasing fuel on credit (this is required as customers take up to 90 days to pay AFTER the transport has been provided) – and the transporter has paid for fuel, paid the driver, covered other costs and still needs

to operate a business – whilst others just don’t have any cash to carry themselves for 90 days.

Whether we like it – or not – the continuous increases in the price of diesel inevitably drives the cost of transport and logistics up – step by step. And, with roughly 85% of all goods moved through and around the country having a road leg at some part in the journey, there will be increases to consumers (you and I), as the cost to transport goods increases.

Fuel breached the 50% mark in daily operating costs during the third quarter of the year. Now, as we head into the final months of 2023 – with this 3,6% increase – the sector is heading towards the 60% level seen during the last months of 2022. That’s a huge increase in cost to company (any company or business that requires goods to be transported to manufacturing / processing / packaging / staging / distribution or retail operations) that simply cannot be borne by the company.

That cost will – in most cases – be borne by the consumer. You and I will pay more for – well – everything. From food to fuel, from clothing to electronic goods and everything in between. Prices will rise – some immediately, but more so a domino effect will ensue, the next in a long line of such domino effects that we have seen too often in the last few months.

Transport costs will rise. There is no alternative for transporters – and those that cannot afford to carry loads at the rates or prices customers are prepared to pay, will simply close down.

More business closures, more unemployment, less business and revenue driven through the transport sub-sector industries, and of course, higher prices at the till!

Consumers have enjoyed – for the first time in the Reserve Bank Repo Rate cycles – a breather (rates remained the same). However these sorts of fuel price increases could wipe out the gains in taming inflation



Gavin Kelly, Chief Executive Officer of The Road Freight Association

that the Reserve Bank has won. Hopefully the inflation monster will not revive – and another reprieve will be afforded to consumers in November.

However, should an interest rate increase occur: that, together with transportation costs for goods and services, will grip the consumer in another tight financial squeeze just before the Festive Season – where traditionally many retailers have generated income to carry them through the financial year.

This may – as in 2022 – reduce any chance of a bountiful retail season as has been enjoyed in the past – and there are many consumers who will “stay at home” and cut the “lavish spending” associated with the Festive Season. 🌀

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