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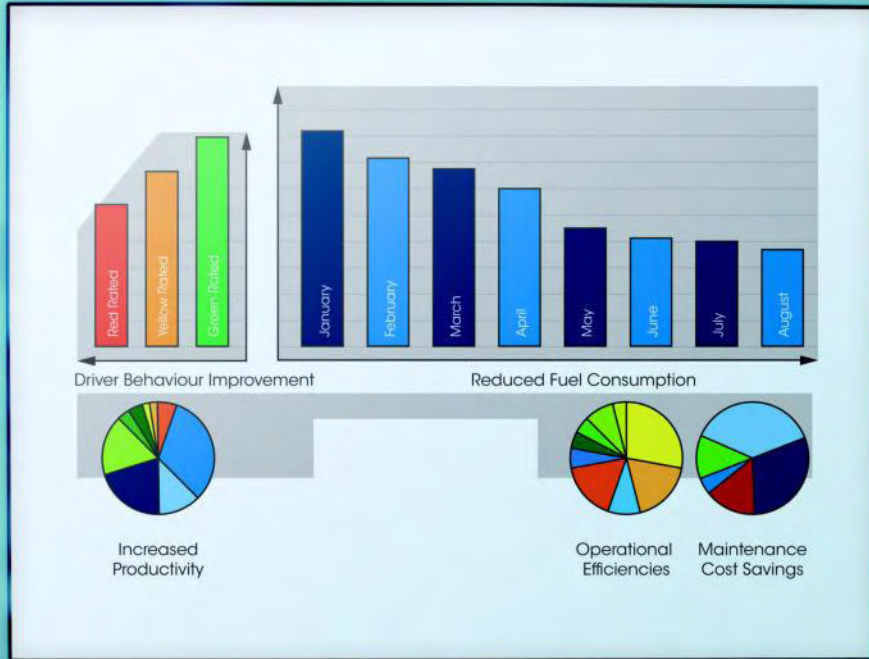
SABOA BUS

VEHICLE OF COMMUNICATION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN BUS OPERATORS ASSOCIATION



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Grand stands

KEYNOTE speaker at this year's SABOA Conference and Exhibition, Godfrey Selepe, Director-General of the Department of Transport (standing in for transport minister Dipuo Peters) noted that the bus industry has its "best chance in decades to forge a new future".

There are a host of developments in the pipeline, with Mathabatha Mokonyama, deputy Director-General of the Department of Transport (DoT), outlining public transport interventions planned for main and emerging metros, as well as nationally. On a national basis, scheduled daily bus services to main centres and weekly services to regional towns will be prioritised, while a vehicle re-capitalisation plan is to be introduced.

The 2016 National Conference and Exhibition – in the second iteration of the two-day format – certainly gave the appearance of new futures being forged, hosting more operators than previously and showcasing numerous significant product developments. Among these were Iveco's Afriway bus (and chassis), MAN Truck & Bus SA's HB3 18.350 FOC and Marcopolo Torino-bodied budget chassis offering, the 18.220 FOC, Mercedes-Benz Bus & Coach's MCV-bodied OF 917 (built on the chassis launched at last year's event) and the Scania chassis, Busmark body Unitrans Passenger Euro VI alternative fuel bus... lots to see, touch, feel and walk through.

SABOA executive manager Eric Cornelius says, "We are very pleased with the exhibition. We received compliments

from various exhibitors who felt that it was better than the previous year, especially the attendance of operators. In this regard, we had a 20% increase in the number of operator delegates compared to last year. Overall, the number of delegates were very similar to last year – 460 delegates.

"We are delighted that in the current difficult financial climate we had such good support from our Associate members and Principal members and we wish to thank them for their loyal support.

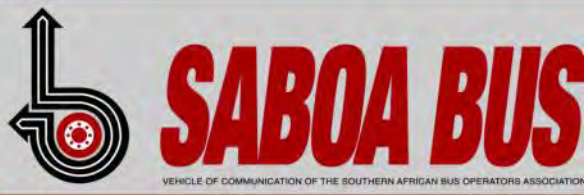
"We are also pleased with the conference in spite of the fact that the Minister of Transport cancelled at very short notice. The presentations were well received by the delegates, which indicates that the selection of topics were spot on."

The Wednesday-night gala dinner was well supported, with guests responding enthusiastically to presentations by engaging motivational speaker David Molapo, followed by 'mentalists, illusionist, magician' Larry Soffer.

The event was rounded off with the customary lucky draw and the traditional Mercedes-Benz South Africa-sponsored cocktail party on the deck. Best small, medium and large exhibition awards went to Volvo, Scania and MAN.

Exhibitors expressed their satisfaction with the two-day format, which enables them to enjoy maximum exposure for the investment, while participants highlighted the exceptional networking opportunities the annual event provides.

Cindy Haler, Editor



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'The bus industry has every reason to be confident'

Government has identified transport as central to the implementation of a nine-point plan to tackle unemployment, inequality and poverty – when transport systems are efficient, they provide economic and social opportunities and many other benefits

THE annual conference of the Southern African Bus Operators Association (SABOA) took place over two rainy days in Pretoria in March. Despite the inclement weather, delegates turned out in large numbers. There was a sizable audience on hand to greet Godfrey Selepe, the Director-General of the Department of Transport (DoT) who delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Minister of Transport, Dipuo Peters.

Selepe said public transport is playing an increasingly important role in the South African economy and in society at large, noting that the ANC-led government has identified the transport sector – and the bus industry in particular – as areas of social inequality. Transformation is needed, he stressed.

He referred to initiatives going back to the dawn of South Africa's democracy – 1994 – which provided South Africans with the opportunity to pursue economic growth, development and redistribution so as to achieve a better life for all. However, he sees the country only at the beginning of a historic transformation of the economy which has as its goals the realisation of the Freedom Charter's vision in which 'the people shall share in the country's wealth'.

"The control of wealth and income, the poverty trap, access to opportunity and so on, are in the main still defined – as per apartheid – on the basis of race and gender. Therefore, the basic economic tasks of the ANC government remain the same – the eradication of the socio-economic legacy of apartheid, the creation of employment and the defeat of poverty."

He said government has identified transport as central to

the implementation of a nine-point plan aimed at addressing the triple scourge of unemployment, inequality and poverty. Because of its intensive use of infrastructure, the transport sector represents a key component of the economy and a tool for development, he believes.

"It is therefore important that we engage all critical stakeholders, like yourselves, if we are to meet the terms of our mandate and the critical needs of our people," Selepe stressed, adding that high-density transport infrastructures and highly connected transport networks are commonly associated with high levels of development. "When transport systems are efficient they provide economic and social opportunities and many other benefits."



Godfrey Selepe, the Director-General of the Department of Transport, delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Minister of Transport, Dipuo Peters

By Howard Mellet

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Soon also available with automatic transmission as well as with a 6x2 chassis.

Selepe noted that the bus industry in South Africa has for many years made a vital contribution to the economic and social development of the country. "The bus services provide mobility to millions of people who are dependent on public transport – for example, learners who require transport to and from school, workers to and from their jobs, and individuals who are seeking employment or access to hospitals and other services. Statistics indicate that 80% of South Africa's population is totally dependent on public transport for its mobility needs."

He said today around 80 000 buses are involved in public transport industries while another 6 000 are used in commerce and industry for mainly in-house purposes. The value of these vehicles is in the region of R25-billion. Around 850-million passengers are transported per annum, providing employment for approximately 30 000 people.

He continued: "I am pleased with SABOA's endorsement of the Road Transport Management System [RTMS] to improve road safety in the bus industry. Most notable is the introduction of SANS 10399 – South African National Standard – Quality Management Systems: 4 Requirements for Bus Operators – which has given rise to a certification scheme for all bus and coach operators.

"Daily specific safety checks prescribed by a standardised minimum daily inspection sheet, scheduled maintenance, driver safety refresher courses and extensive route planning are vital components of this initiative. Most importantly, this initiative plays an essential role in reducing road accidents as it reduces the number of unfit vehicles on the roads."

Selepe reminded his audience that one of the focal points of the current government is to ensure that integrated public transport systems are promoted through passenger rail, but most importantly road-based transport services – of which the bus industry is a vital part.

He said this is aligned with the strategic focus of the National Development Plan (NDP) which places emphasis on the totality of the transport network to promote economic growth and employment. It stresses the importance of integrated public transport systems together with effective and efficient land utilisation.

"It is against this background that the past five years have seen the exciting developments for the transport sector with the implementation of our public transport strategy – which has been central to the transformation of the public transport system.

"You only have to think back 10 or 15 years to see how far we've come from the bad old days of public transport, with no regard for customer needs and inflexible services.

"For instance, without good bus services that are

accessible, affordable and attractive to a broad range of people, local economic development reaches an impasse and is marginalised."

Selepe stated that the government's public transport strategy has provided transport for millions of people and has demonstrated its viability as an accepted alternative to the car. "Our shared vision for the future is ideally a bus industry in which excellence is the norm and where unsatisfactory performance is an anomaly."

He said the public transport strategy has led to incremental growth and significant investment since 2005, highlighting the promotion and delivery of integrated rapid public transport networks (IRPTNs) currently implemented in 13 municipalities as examples of how well the public transport turnaround strategy is being adopted.

"We are changing the way public transport is managed. We've also seen some extraordinary turnarounds in some areas of the country – with decades of no bus service being replaced with what can only be described as phenomenal public transport improvements."

According to Selepe, the SABOA Conference is but one of the 'good stories' being told about the contribution of black entrepreneurship in transport, particularly, in the bus industry.

"As the government of South Africa we are indeed grateful to have a partnership with an organisation such as SABOA which understands the needs of the people of our country. This partnership will go a long way to push back the frontiers of poverty."

Selepe hastened to add that while the partnership was on the right track, there is still a long way to go.

Turning to government transport subsidies, he said they were comparatively high – at around 60% of the costs of rendering the service. He contrasted this with the subsidy in most developed and developing countries which he said rarely exceeds 30%. "Nevertheless government is mindful of the shortfall in the subsidy we provide for certain operators and we're making all efforts in consultation with the treasury to 'plug the gaps'."

He concluded by saying that buses remain one of South African's most popular means of public transport and the bus industry has every reason to be confident for its future.

"But just as we should look to the future with shared optimism, we should also be realistic about the size of the task at hand. We have to make a sharp turn and break down basic barriers that have held back the bus industry's growth at a time of booming demand for both mobility and travel. Today we have our best chance in decades to forge a new future for this industry in South Africa." ■

Accelerating turnaround in the contract bus industry

There's a welcome prospect of relief for contract transport operators as budget increases are earmarked to improve per-kilometre remuneration rather than expand commuter services

THE question of subsidised commuter bus services and their viability came under the spotlight at the annual conference of the Southern African Bus Operators Association (SABOA) when Mathabatha Mokonyama, the deputy Director-General of the Department of Transport (DoT) stepped up to the podium to address delegates.

He noted that the government's mission is to lead the development of efficient integrated transport systems by creating a framework of sustainable policies and regulations together with implementable models to support government strategies for socio-economic development.

By Howard Mellet

In this light he advised that the DoT's Accelerated Public Transport Turnaround Plan – currently being finalised for consultation – would be underpinned by a proposed subsidy budget of R4,939-billion for 2015/16. He noted, however, that this figure was not yet confirmed because the parliamentary procedures around the DORA (Division of Revenue Act) are in the process of being finalised.

"The president will sign it [the Act] soon," he said, advising that it will include budget increases that will not be allocated to expand commuter services, but rather to help improve the performances of current contract holders by offering them an increased rate-per-kilometre. "The current contractors are suffering," he stressed.

Looking at the issue of commuter bus service subsidies from the operators' perspective, Mokonyama listed some of the challenges expected to be addressed by government. These include the fact that current short-term contract extensions do not allow for any growth in either the specific service or general operating areas.

"Moreover, operators are reluctant to allocate additional



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Mathabatha Mokonyama, deputy Director-General of the Department of Transport: the large gulf between operators' expenditure and the government's subsidy allocation has been closing steadily

resources due to their deteriorating financial position and there is uncertainty over how much longer the current contracts can be extended." He said fleets need a high level of certainty in order to address vehicle replacements and refurbishments.

Underlining the fact that the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to subsidised commuter bus services is not an option, he said changes have to be made. He pointed to contract rates-per-revenue-kilometre figures for 2013/14 in which there are significant inequities between the average, minimum and maximum rates depending on contract areas as defined and classified by the DoT; metropolitan, emerging metro, rural and national.

For example, he highlighted the disparity in emerging metro areas: the minimum contract rate is R1,05 per-revenue-kilometre while the maximum is R32,08.

Focusing his attention on these classified areas, he said the DoT is considering an intervention to improve commuter bus services on a significant scale. He warned that one of the initiatives would be moderating the developments in bus rapid transit (BRT) services in a bid to 'save money'.

Nevertheless, he said that in 'main metros' an emphasis will be placed on feeder services and routes, new bus stations, updated vehicle fleets and integrated ticketing systems overseen by sophisticated operational control centres.

In 'emerging metros' the emphasis will be on priority bus trunk routes and an integrated network of feeder services – including taxi services. In rural areas the provision of quality public transport services will remain the key objective with formalised inter-town services being prioritised along with the inception of mixed fleets including buses, midi buses and taxis.

On a national basis, scheduled daily bus services to main centres will be prioritised together with weekly services to regional towns. A vehicle re-capitalisation plan will be introduced.

A three-year horizon is envisaged for the full implementation of the intervention plan as outlined.

Switching his focus to the transportation of learners, Mokonyama said it continues to present a challenge to government. He noted that around 507 000 students attending 2 857 schools in South Africa currently qualify for learner transport.

He said government recognises the need to have a uniform approach to the transportation of learners and the fulfilment of the constitutional mandate to provide a safe and efficient transport system for them. To achieve these goals, the government has provided a budget of R2,097-billion to be administered by the DoT and the Department of Education (DoE).

Looking to the future, Mokonyama said operators should be optimistic in that the large gulf between their expenditure and the government's subsidy allocation, which reached its widest point in 2008/9, has been closing steadily since then, to the point where the subsidy graph is roughly aligned with the expenditure graph today. ■



Buffing a legend: MAN debuts the new Lion's Explorer HB 3

Such is the renown of MAN's 18.352 that operators keen to get their hands on the manufacturer's reincarnation of the vehicle placed orders before pricing had even been finalised

MAN launched its HB3 18.350 FOC Lion's Explorer at the SABOA Conference and Exhibition, building on a solid base provided by the 18.352 – boosting horsepower up to 350, as well as incorporating air suspension and TipMatic automated manual transmission.

The 18.352 was phased out about a decade ago, in the belief that the market favoured the extra capacity provided by a three-axle chassis, but MAN Truck & Bus SA head of bus sales, Philip Kalil-Zackey, says there is definitely a market for “a 12,5-metre high-power, front engine bus”.

The configuration is ideally suited to mountainous terrain, where a 13,9-metre bus would be difficult to manoeuvre around tight bends and tricky turns. In addition to compact dimensions, the HP boost is also invaluable in demanding terrain.

As word of the new offering has filtered to clients, several units have been pre-sold to operators who have nurtured their 18.352s and are delighted to have an upgrade in the pipeline (the prototype made its debut at

SABOA and the series should reach the market by May).

“We're bringing back a legend with the revival of the 4x2 high powered transmission,” asserts Kalil-Zackey. “Air suspension replaces the steel of the former version, and it's equipped with the TipMatic transmission, where only manual was available in the past. Removing the need for the driver to change gears – the transmission manages that – ensures far greater driver comfort.

“It's a premium front engine 4x2 product, with ABS, disc brakes on all axles, high capacity axles front and rear – it's really robust.”

With an eye on fulfilling the broadest spectrum of requirements, MAN is able to tailor the bus to operator requirements and will derate the engine to a lower HP rating if desired.

The chassis is partnered with MAN's tried and tested



MAN has unveiled its HB3 18.350 FOC Lion's Explorer, combining impressive horsepower with air suspension and TipMatic automated manual transmission.

By Cindy Haler

Lion's Explorer body, with the unit on show kitted out as an up-spec'd commuter bus featuring cloth seats, parcel shelves and full luggage lockers. This configuration would be suitable either for commuter or long distance use. In addition, the larger engine facilitates the inclusion of air conditioning – formerly impossible in 12-metre format and necessitating a step up to a larger vehicle – positioning the vehicle in semi-luxury territory. Alcoa wheels are another option, adding to the vehicle's aesthetic appeal while trimming some weight. The standard 65-capacity 3x2 seating arrangement may also be adapted to operator requirements.

"If you want an all-rounder, the vehicle ticks a lot of boxes," continues Kalil-Zackey. "In terms of volumes we're looking to achieve, I think the year will have a slow start because of the exchange rate scenario, but we're anticipating that the 18.350 will be a very good seller."

"It has received a very good response, with very little marketing, because its predecessor has such a good reputation. It's basically the same product as MAN's other HB offerings, with two axles instead of three, which means it's tried and tested and fits in with what a lot of customers want."

The reason for the reintroduction of the two-axle configuration can be found in route surveys for a client which highlighted the challenging nature of the operator's terrain – leading MAN to discard its initial proposal in favour of the 4x2, 12,5-metre option. "We decided that as we had the product in our lineup, we should return to it."

The six cylinder common rail Euro III engine provides 228 kW at 1 900 rpm and maximum torque of 1 550 Nm at 1 000 to 1 400 rpm.

High spec budget bus

Also making its first appearance at SABOA was MAN's budget chassis offering, the 18.220 FOC, bodied by Marcopolo. The 220 HP engine is coupled with a manual gearbox, with safety features including ABS and retarder, along with all-round air suspension to boost comfort. "For a budget vehicle, it's high spec," notes Kalil-Zackey.

The joint project sees the chassis fitted with Marcopolo's Torino commuter body. With product development carried out in conjunction with MAN engineers from Germany, the 18.220 is undergoing homologation and the first series units should be available from April.

Kalil-Zackey is adamant that the offering does not compete with the OEM's existing lineup: "MAN is a premium product, VW is low cost. Prior to this joint development, we didn't have anything in the budget segment. This bridges the

gap between premium products and low cost products, priced accordingly. It's a solid in-between vehicle."

The low cost segment, according to Kalil-Zackey, is largely populated by truck chassis to bus conversions, leading to a proliferation of no-frills 65-seater commuters absent of components such as retarders and ABS.

Target markets include schools and universities, as well as contract transport for mines which requires ABS and retarders. There's also scope to interest traditional fleet customers, as they're increasingly diversifying to combat trying economic conditions. The optimism Kalil-Zackey holds for 18.350 sales extend to the 18.220 too: "I can see it being a volume product," he says, adding that it will be an important offering in MAN's arsenal when competing based largely on price. Operators running scholar, university or mine contracts receive a specified rate – and in that context, vehicle pricing is crucial. Products need to be priced below a certain point.

"The 18.220 allows MAN to fit into a gap where we've been battling to compete – now we're going to make it hard for others to compete."

CKD production of the chassis is on the cards prior to year-end.

In another product development, MAN is equipping its VW 17.210 range with ABS functionality, ahead of mandatory requirements kicking in next year.

With an enhanced MAN bus and coach team in place, along with a strong dealer network, Kalil-Zackey says that now it's crucial to support those developments with products. "That's the next phase of our strategy: to ensure that our products remain relevant. You have to keep reinventing yourself in terms of product strategy. We strive to always be one step ahead." In keeping with this philosophy, future product innovations emanating from MAN Bus & Coach are assured. ■



MAN's 'high spec budget bus', the 18.220 FOC, bodied by Marcopolo, made its first appearance at the recent SABOA exhibition

New products, services make their debut at SABOA

The annual SABOA Conference and Exhibition served as a platform for the launch of several important new product and service offerings

Africoach, founded in 2001, prides itself on providing innovative solutions to the public transport industry. It supplies a wide range of parts to bus builders, body refurbishers, tour operators and public transport companies. Its Busworx concern specialises in accident repair, as well as the refurbishment of buses and coaches. The company says it provides speedy assessments followed by reasonable quotations and a quick turnaround to get the job done. Pictured manning the stand are Busworx' Zubair Seedat (left) and Francois Coertze.



Almex Transport Solutions presented details of the almex.mobile solution at SABOA. A new generation of portable ticket vending systems, it is based on the open platform Windows CE.net. "This open platform allows software to be reused in applications across the different ticketing systems, offering protection for customers' investments," says Faizel Ballim (left). He explains that the almex.mobile system supports the common variations of non-cash payment, ticket sales and additional applications – such as catering, time schedule information and other information-based functions. Also pictured is Lucas Mteto, executive chairman of NT-T Group. He says his company,

Khudu Technologies, is gearing up to be a major role player in the provision of ICT services, including ticketing technologies and automated fare collection systems.



SABOA stalwart AON was on hand to promote its range of risk management services and create awareness of its insurance and reinsurance brokerage, human capital and management consulting, and specialty insurance underwriting. According to AON, its trucking and passenger transport risk management experts understand the complex legal and cultural issues that shape transport companies' and organisations' strategies and approach to risk. Its experts focus on a wide range of issues, including loss forecasts, retentions service providers and public liability in order to devise appropriate insurance solutions.



Taking pride of place on the Apollo Tyres stand, the new Endurance BA tyre was launched at the SABOA Conference. Targeted at bus and coach applications, it features a five-rib design with centre zig-zag and straight shoulder groove to enhance control and handling on wet and dry roads. Suitable for all wheel positions, the Endurance BA has a tread pattern designed to lower road noise, says Adrian Beck, Apollo group product manager (left). "Together with a special tread compound, its wide circumferential shoulder reduces irregular wear while an optimised footprint helps ensure longer tread life." Also pictured is Melissa Morgenrood, Apollo's marketing communications manager.



AutoTrak Bureau Services is accepted as an effective risk mitigator, says regional manager, Candice Grant-Oliver (pictured). "By implementing our driver management programme, transport managers can benefit from reduced operational risk, improved service delivery, better fuel efficiency, reduced maintenance costs and – most importantly – reduced complexity associated with multiple vehicle management." She says AutoTrak monitors and controls drivers' on-road behaviour as related to unscheduled stops, speed, route deviations, erratic driving and more. "Statics confirm there is a vast improvement in driver behaviour once we begin actively monitoring and controlling their perimeter violations," she notes, adding that AutoTrak also provides assistance with customer retention and has emergency assistance available.



The BRAF Automotive/ Higer Bus and Coach coach in the outside display area attracted a high level of interest. The unit couples a Higer body with Cummins engine along with components from a reputable range of suppliers including ZF, WABCO, and Telma. Transmission is a choice of manual or automatic, with clients given leeway to specify the interior in line with their requirements. Seating ranges from 28 to 36. Fabio Janowski da Cruz says the coach was introduced to fall in with the trend towards smaller, more executive tour groups, positioned to provide a spec that was being overlooked. Accordingly, the coach may be equipped with a host of optional extras such as USB for all seats, wifi, reverse cameras, sensors, full aircon, heaters and flat screen monitors. According to Janowski da Cruz, 24-hour a day backup is available. Units are accompanied by a 120 000 km or 18 month warranty.



Busmark and Scania provided body and chassis respectively on the Unitrans Passenger Euro VI bus. Danie Human, Busmark GM, sales – pictured with Busmark's JP Greeff – says that along with an emphasis on green technology, there is a drive towards weight savings, because of the allied fuel and emission reductions. Weight saving measures include the use of 3CK12 in frame structures and well as using GRP and ABS plastic in body construction, which – besides being light and strong – are able to withstand extreme temperatures and humidity. On home turf, Busmark has streamlined its



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manufacturing procedures, trimming waste and extra production processes, in order to improve its carbon footprint. Along with the Unitrans Passenger unit, Busmark-bodied Fuso, Hino and Isuzu vehicles were on display.

Ctrack announced an affordable vehicle tracking and fleet management package for upcoming young bus operators running 10 or less buses. Ctrack will offer reduced rates, provide installation free of charge and cover all maintenance costs for the duration of the 36 months' contract. Businesses will be equipped with fleet management tools and stolen vehicle recovery services. "More resources should be channelled towards supporting micro, small to medium enterprises and cooperatives as the sector holds the key to meaningful economic growth and employment creation," says Hein Jordt, MD of Ctrack Fleet Management Solutions. Ctrack's reporting structures provide the tools to help SMEs comply with Road Transport Management System (RTMS) requirements. Manning the Ctrack stand were Chris Duvange and Kagiso Matshitse, part of the Ctrack sales team.



eBus Supplies specialises in the sale and support of automated fare collection systems for public transport. As exclusive Parkeon-Wayfarer distributor in South Africa, it provides hardware and software support, upgrading, refurbishing and consumables for legacy Wayfarer fare collection systems. The Wayfarer 6 may be configured for any form of payment, from traditional paper tickets, to magnetic cards, contactless tickets and contactless smart and bank



cards, to mobile phone and open payment systems. eBus Supplies maintains the hardware systems of more than 60 bus operators in South Africa. As well as stocking consumables (paper rolls, ink bobbins, smart cards), it provides after sales support, system health checks, revenue analysis reporting and cloud backup services.

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What is AdBlue? This question was answered by the Engen team at the SABOA Conference whose task it was to create awareness for Engen's own AdBlue product offering called Air1. Engen advised that Air1 is now available in various packaging options ranging from 10 litre packs, 210 litre drums and 1 000 to 4 000 litre intermediate bulk containers.

"AdBlue, used with the Selective Catalytic Reduction system to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen from the exhaust of diesel vehicles, is produced under stringent conditions to ensure purity. This must be maintained throughout distribution and storage processes," explains Wiaan Burger (left) commercial fuels area manager at Engen. Pictured with him are Putso Kotsedi, marketing manager, and Werner Visser (right) commercial fuels area manager.



According to Fogmaker's Graham Russel (pictured) most vehicle fires start in the engine compartment. He says a well-developed fire is often impossible to fight with a hand-held extinguisher. The solution is an installed and fully-automatic suppression system. Fogmaker has developed



a method that suppresses fire with the help of water vapour. Just half a cup of water is necessary to extinguish a raging fire. "Water mist under high pressure is a far superior extinguishing medium in an engine compartment. The high pressure, in combination with special nozzles, creates micro-drops – 8 000 are equal to one drop of water – which evaporate immediately upon contact with heat. The vapour increases the water content of the air and starves the fire of oxygen. In addition, the rapid cooling of the burnt gasses and the hot parts in the engine compartment further contribute to a rapid extinguishing, reducing the risk of re-ignition" he says.

Goodyear Tyres showcased three of its latest offerings at SABOA. Nelius Botha (left) and Alwyn Carstens explain that the Regional RHS II is a new-generation tyre developed to maximise fuel efficiency in long haul applications. They say the tyres can handle a wide range of



applications including regional and long-haul services. Also on display was the Goodyear Marathon LHS II tyre targeted at long-range applications. Featuring Goodyear's Fuel Max Technology the Marathon LHS is also designed to reduce fuel consumption while offering superior durability and improved wet weather braking capabilities. Goodyear's Omnitrac MSS II tyres were featured at SABOA. This range has been specifically developed and designed for enhanced mileage and traction performance in construction and on/off road operations.

On hand to promote the benefits of Hino's bus offerings – built on the OEM's 300 and 500 chassis – were Hino SA's Norah Dlamini and Thomas Khumalo, sales executive, Imperial Hino, Hino Tshwane. The Hino 300 bus range is geared to transporting smaller groups of people, such as students and company staff, combining optimum seating capacity (from 25 to 35) and low capital cost per passenger. The 500 Series offerings are either commuter range (for

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mining and construction companies, educational institutions, government departments and owner-operators) or semi-luxury (able to handle African climate and poor operating conditions, while providing driver and passenger comfort).

Premier sponsor of the SABOA Conference, Ibiliti insures drivers and passengers against death or bodily injury. It offers vehicle insurance with either comprehensive cover, third-party fire and theft, or third-party only. There



are a number of optional covers. Backed by Mutual and Federal Risk Financing Limited, Ibiliti provides an extensive short-term insurance solution for bus and coach operators. The company, led by Yolandi van Niekerk, (pictured) was appointed as the official short-term insurance provider for SABOA on 1 December 2014. "The structure of our product is flexible and allows for customised underwriting," she says. "The solution includes state-of-the-art technology when it comes to risk, claims and fund management – as well as emergency response and underwriting efficiency."

One of the largest South African-owned brokers, Indwe Risk Services offers a range of solutions including SABOA bus insurance, business insurance, individual insurance, risk consulting and RTMS (Road Transport Management System) assistance. Lucas Nkosi (pictured) administrative and underwriting manager (special risk, automotive and



transportation) says Indwe – a Level 3 B-BBEE contributor – is a SABOA-approved broker specialising in transportation. "With 25 branches countrywide we offer a personalised service for all-sized clients," he says. The Indwe mission is to work with the best people in the industry, provide relevant risk solutions and ensure a rewarding customer experience. Its goals are to achieve sustainable efficiencies and financial returns for its clients while making a positive impact on its communities.

Isuzu Truck World (ITW) is a new Isuzu truck and bus dealership network in South Africa. A subsidiary of Itochu Corporation of Japan and a local equity B-BBEE partner, ITW has a strong focus on the bus market, says Mthabiso Luthuli



(pictured) a sales executive at the dealership. The company used the SABOA conference to spotlight its new 65-seat commuter bus targeted at government sector applications including learner and staff transport. "Our task at SABOA has been to persuade delegates to think of Isuzu as a bus manufacturer in addition to a truck manufacturer," he says, confirming that the Isuzu bus chassis are assembled in Port Elizabeth before heading to Busmark for their body structures.

Iveco's bus team was on hand for the unveiling of the manufacturer's Afriway offering, with a chassis on display indoors and a built unit on show outside. The front engine vehicle will be supplied in 4x2 configuration (12,3-metre, 65-seater) and 6x2 (14-metre, three axle), with the choice of manual and automatic transmission. The intention is to cater for an array of market requirements, including long distance,





intercity applications. Interior options vary from basic commuter to semi-luxury finishes. Suspension has been tailored to create the more comfortable ride related to bus chassis. Transmission offerings have also been adapted for buses although the engine position is still typically truck. The engine position (over the front axle) optimises weight distribution, enabling capacity for 65 seated and 28 standing passengers. Iveco asserts that in its 18-tonne GVM, 65-seater class, fuel consumption is “better than any of the competitors”.

The Kuphelele insurance and benefits scheme, which is growing steadily, hosted a bustling stand. There are two pillars to the Kuphelele initiative, with Ibliti SABOA’s official short term insurance provider and procurement partner Stemulite curating the benefits scheme, with participation from Africoach, eBus Supplies, Engen, Fogmaker, Irizar, OCSACare, PEM Transport, Powertain Truck Spares, Tyre Corporation and Vodacom.

Mantella’s slogan of ‘bringing transport insurance to your doorstep 24/7’ is underscored by its wealth of experience, innovative product offerings – targeted at the transport arena – and a commitment to excellent service, says Pearly De Silva. The company provides short term personal and commercial insurance cover. “Flexible, fast and efficient are our watchwords”, she continues, adding that Mantella is able to negotiate significant premium saving on its clients’ behalf together with benefits designed to fit their businesses. The company, with branches in Gauteng, Cape Town, Durban and Bloemfontein, offers three types of cover; comprehensive, third-party, fire and theft, and third-party only. It offers free installation of tracking and driver behaviour monitoring devices.



MAN Truck & Bus SA launched two important product offerings at the SABOA Conference and Exhibition: its Lion’s Explorer HB 3 18.350 premium offering is a high powered (350 hp) front engine 4x2 unit, while the 18.220 FOC positions the OEM to service customers in the gap between premium MAN offerings and the low cost Volkbus range (see page 9). On hand to unveil the HB 3 were Heiko Haumer, vice president, Head of Regional & International Key Accounts, MAN Truck & Bus AG, Giacomo Virgili, head of retail sales, bus, MAN Truck & Bus SA, Philip Kalil-Zackey, head of bus sales, MAN Truck & Bus SA, Stefan Kalk, Sales Bus Region Overseas, MAN Truck & Bus AG, and Tiago Dias, head of department, national accounts, bus, MAN Truck & Bus SA.

Marcopolo enjoyed a successful SABOA outing, with its Torino G6 commuter body on MAN’s 18.220 FOC chassis as well as the Volvo B9R generating significant interest. The MAN chassis is being positioned by the OEM to bridge the gap between its premium MAN and low cost VW offerings. “Prior to this joint development, we didn’t have anything in the budget segment,” says MAN Truck & Bus SA bus sales head Philip Kalil-Zackey. The unit is viewed by MAN as an important offering when competing based largely on price. The debut of the 18.220 chassis and Torino G6 body drew a great deal of interest from operators, according to Marcopolo commercial manager Avashan Govender. The significance of the Torino-bodied Volvo unit on display is its 120 total



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passenger capacity – reported by Govender to be the highest obtainable with a rigid vehicle in the marketplace. It matches bustrain capacity, delivering the same return for lower outlay. Its high capacity positions it ideally for urban commuter operation, notes Govender.

MCV used the opportunity presented by the SABOA Conference and Exhibition to introduce its new GM Awny Sadek to the market, as well as to unveil its 40-seater



commuter on Mercedes-Benz's OF 917 chassis, with the body incorporating 83% local content. Pictured are national and export sales executive Sean Rook Van Rensburg (left) and Sadek.

Celebrating 120 years of building commercial vehicles, Mercedes-Benz SA Bus & Coach debuted its OF 917 – built on the chassis launched at last year's event – bodied by MCV. As it is a dedicated bus chassis, rather than a truck conversion, comfort levels are bolstered significantly. This also facilitates placement of the door in front of the axle,



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allowing plenty of room for entry and exit (this is not possible in truck conversions). Target markets include scholar and mine transport. Extensive testing has been conducted to identify and smooth out any teething problems. On display outside was the OEM's OH 1826 U Euro V bus chassis, bodied by Busmark. Mercedes-Benz Bus & Coach division head Shane Henry says government has made enormous strides in the provision of public transport – and its emphasis on high tech, low emission vehicles is commendable.

A subsidiary of VNE Commercial, Northwest Bus & Coach Suppliers specialises in the manufacturing, importing and supply of heavy-duty replacement components for the transport industry, in particular originally manufactured quality replacement suspension components and body hardware for the bus industry aftermarket. According to Viren Mangali (pictured), the 100% black-owned company, managed by Level 1 BEE accreditation, is fully committed to playing a role in the upliftment of the country through the development of persons from previously disadvantaged



communities. It is also Northwest's goal to work as a team, striving towards excellence in terms of providing quality products and a reliable service. "In order to expand our market we strive to maintain and improve relationships with our suppliers to ensure outstanding quality and promptness," he adds.

The Road Accident Fund (RAF) has touched the lives of thousands of victims of road accidents and made a significant difference in the lives of those affected by these often tragic incidents. In the 2013/14 financial year the RAF paid a record R22,2-billion in settlements fulfilling its mandate to cover, compensate and rehabilitate those who become victims of road carnage. The Fund is said to be on the right path to becoming an excellent service provider that all road-users can be proud of. Pictured on the RAF stand at SABOA are (from left) Lebu Maiapeira and Dolly Moloantoa (service consultants), Philly Molonyama (responsible for stakeholder relations) and Daniel Sambo, a bus owner from Mpumalanga.



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The SABOA exhibition provided first sight of the CNG bus commissioned by Unitrans Passenger, pairing a Scania chassis and Busmark body. Post-homologation, 10 of the Scania K280 4x2 Euro VI CNG 61-seater buses are set to go into operation by April. Fledgling alternative fuel projects have sparked significant interest, with Scania looking to promote its alternative fuel offerings in response to market demand. Scania SA's alternative fuel offering encompasses biodiesel, HVO (hydro-treated vegetable oil), biogas and natural gas, and bioethanol/ ED95. The vehicle on display was billed as the first Euro VI engine in Africa.



Vehicle and capital equipment financier Standard Bank Vehicle and Asset Finance finances movable assets and boasts specialists in the fields of transport, aviation, mining, construction, medical and fleet management services. Standing by at the SABOA conference was Standard Bank's dedicated team of experts ready to assist delegates with financing of any vehicle or asset. Busi Zwane (left), Tshepo Temane, Tshepo Seotimeng and Ayanda Ntobi were prepared



to arrange comprehensive packages to suit bus operators' needs, whether they be for instalment sale, financial lease, full maintenance lease and operating rentals. They were also geared to offer structured financing options to meet companies' larger financing requirements.

Revenue and asset protection for the passenger transport industry and entities that sell or use tickets, tags, cards and coupons with a monetary value are at the core of TickTech's range of offerings. They include the provision of roving and fixed-point ticket inspections, undercover operations to expose illegal behaviour and the monitoring of passenger trends, driver discipline, service levels and a host of related special operations. The company's stand at SABOA was manned by Nomsa Mavuso (left) and Dumsane Mtshali (inspectorate manager) who emphasise that TickTech's services focus on minimising risks and address pilferage practices, thereby increasing revenue for clients. They note that TickTech is the only inspection company currently rendering BRT fare evasion inspections.



Traffic Management Technologies is a provider of intelligent transport systems, including systems for advanced public transport management, advanced traffic management, road user charging and road safety enforcement. Craig Graham says his company provides capacity in transport systems research and development as well as engineering and production of intelligent transport systems (ITS) equipment. It also designs and deploys ITS software and databases, and oversees the operations and maintenance of transport solutions. "Traffic Management Technologies is an innovative



technology integrator that provides ITS to a fast-paced and ever-changing market,” he says. Highlighting just one of its many services, he says the Automatic Fare Collection System facilitates revenue collection via conveniently assessable fare media for various modes of transport.

“We offer a reliable solution to combat fare evasion,” says Vix-Questek company representative Danie Goosen (pictured). “Fully integrated with our electronic fare collection and automatic vehicle location systems, the compact fare evasion



and fraud management devices are designed to accurately identify fare evaders, electronically recording activities on buses and reporting to back office environments,” he says. Four digital cameras, integrated people counting systems and uniquely-programmed algorithms intelligently detect passengers boarding a bus without paying and immediately raise an exception that can be tracked to time and location of the vehicle. “A real-time exception is flagged when a commuter is counted without a corresponding ticket being issued,” he explains.

Voith Turbo is synonymous with the supply of innovative drive and braking systems to the transport industry (as well as rail and marine industries). This is according to Quintin Gruhn (left) key account manager – commercial vehicles at Voith. The company showcased its latest engineering technologies in transmissions and retarders at the SABOA Conference. It also emphasised the value of its service, parts availability, technical backup support and warranty handling to bus operators and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) alike. A focus was Voith’s DIWA.6 transmission. “Its newly designed housing helps to meet noise guidelines while intelligent start-up management and the required control of the ancillary components help reduce fuel consumption by up to 5%,” says Simba Shambare (right) Voith’s aftermarket business development manager.



Volvo Bus used its presence at the SABOA conference to showcase its Volvo Dynamic Steering system, claimed to be a ‘breakthrough in terms of effortless steering without strain or pain’. “Better than power steering, it is a world-class technical innovation,” says Vinesh Rambaran, a sales

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engineer at Volvo Bus SA (pictured). Volvo Dynamic Steering combines conventional hydraulic power steering with an electronically regulated electric motor fitted to the steering gear. The result is precise steering that gives the driver a safer, more comfortable and more enjoyable working environment. It benefits the truck driver in all operating conditions, says Rambaran. "On the highway the dynamic steering system offers unbeatable directional stability. At low speeds even a heavily loaded truck is so easy to steer." ■ ■



We want to thank all our visitors for making the SABOA exhibition a truly memorable event for us. And it was a success; Volvo Southern Africa are proud to have received the Best Stand Award in the medium size category. Among the criteria were visual impact, functionality and communication elements. This award spotlights the value of presenting our offer well and encouraging dialogue with our visitors. We look forward to seeing you next time.

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Out and about

SABOA's annual conference and exhibition is held in high regard as a 'meet and greet' platform, facilitating networking and interaction among industry suppliers and operators – with tea- and lunch-time providing plenty of opportunity for mingling. Out and about at this year's event....



Legendary legerdemain

SABOA's gala dinner, hosted during the Association's annual conference and exhibition, tends to deliver food for thought along with its three-course meal. This year was no exception, with motivational speaker David Molapo delivering an upbeat discourse on the benefits of maintaining hopefulness and positivity – along with the requisite action (noting that being busy does not necessarily equate to being effective). Next to hold the floor was mentalist, magician and illusionist Larry Soffer, performing an array of mesmerising, logic-defying acts (no PIN is sacrosanct, it would seem).





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