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COLLABORATION AND ACTION

to save investment and jobs

14 **African Tech Award** for Bay Company

17 **North End Business Cluster** revamps the area

20 **Volkswagen** Embraces Africa Growth

What's in [THIS] issue

04 Collaboration and Action to save investment and jobs
06 Naamsa and the Chamber establish a strategic partnership
08 Chamber appoints six new board members
10 Chamber recognises volunteers for contributions to its programmes
12 Accelerator Programme empowers SMEs with necessary skills
14 Bay Company wins second African Tech Award
17 North End Business Cluster rolls out series of initiatives to revamp the area
20 Volkswagen Africa embraces Africa growth
21 Coega and CSIR partner to develop SEZ Biofibre Hub
23 Chamber engagements & Events
28 Business advice column
30 Member good news
32 Welcome new members

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Collaboration *and Action* to save investment and jobs

South Africa is currently operating in a radically different environment which requires out-of-the-box thinking, agility, resilience and collaboration, said Loyiso Dotwana, President of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber during the organisation's Thirteenth Annual General Meeting held today at the Southern Sun Hotel, in Nelson Mandela Bay.

Dotwana said the country was at a tipping point where everything was coming to a head at the same time, both at a national and local level. "Our country is in a very serious state, with extreme loadshedding now the norm and our rail system, ports and roads all in a dismal state. Couple this with the political drama which has unfolded in many of the countries Metros and Municipalities which has included this metro."

He highlighted that since 2016 Nelson Mandela Bay has faced political instability with coalition governments coming and going, along with this 6 different Mayors. "Furthermore, since 2016 the Municipality has had 12 acting City Managers. It is therefore no surprise that this all has had a detrimental impact on the administration of the metro and the delivery of basic services."

"We face an economic survival crisis which requires all of us to pull together for the greater good of our local economy and jobs. This is not the time for political or personal agendas to determine the way forward. Rather, we should focus on being transparent about what the issues are and how can we solve them as a united front."

He further elaborated that the interventions were not about organised business attempting to take over the role of government or the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, but rather about the involvement and action of all the relevant stakeholders to save investment and jobs through this emergency period. "The Chamber remains apolitical and will work with stakeholders and partners who will do the right thing."

Chamber CEO Denise van Huyssteen highlighted the areas where collaboration between business and various stakeholders had achieved some success in the past year, among which included the following:

+ The approval by City Council of a Master Adopt A MOU which opens the door for business to collaborate with them in solving issues which impact upon businesses.
+ The 24 hour stage 5+ voluntary loadshedding schedule, which is a collaborative initiative between the Chamber and the Municipality, to enable better predictability and continuity for the operations of manufacturers. So far 35 businesses have qualified to partake in this intervention.
+ The initiation of the Chamber's trailblazing renewable energy cluster which represents 20% of the Metro's current electricity usage.
+ The growth in geographic clusters, run under the umbrella of the Cahmber, as a way for businesses to group together to address common issues. These include Perseverance, Struandale, North End, Kariega and Deal Party, while Neave/Korsten recently came on stream.
+ The establishment of a property cluster to Identify and unblock obstacles which are impeding existing investments in the Metro.
+ The Adoption of 19 Sub-Stations, geared at protecting this critical infrastructure from vandalism.
+ The adoption of 76 schools where leaks are being fixed and water conservation solutions are being implemented.
+ Adopt A Leak which saved the Metro over 1.5 million litres of water per day.
+ The strong positive outcome of the Chamber's legal case against NERSA, which essentially restricts municipalities from adding on additional increases as a result of their own inefficiencies.
+ The initiation of a multi-stakeholder Nelson Mandela Bay Climate Change Coalition, with a particular focus on building a climate resilient metro.
+ The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Chamber and Naamsa to enable closer cooperation which will benefit the automotive industry, which forms the backbone of the Metro's local economy.

Dotwana highlighted that while it was pleasing that the country's regulatory environment around independent power generation has been eased, there is more which still needs to be done to accelerate renewable energy adoption.

"A major concern we have is that renewable power which is initiated from any location in the country simply goes back to the national grid. Our view as the Chamber is that what the business community invests at its own cost, must directly benefit the Metro as a whole."

"As we bring more power onto the grid, this should directly reduce levels of loadshedding for our entire metro."

He said that in terms of water and sanitation, the Metro, like most others around the country, faced huge issues and much of this related to aging and poorly maintained infrastructure. "As part of our collaborative approach, we have offered the Municipality technical skills through the broad Adopt-A-MOU currently in place."

"We have also prioritised lobbying local government for solutions to address vandalism on key infrastructure including electrical substations, water pump stations, sanitation pumps and railway lines."

Dotwana said that logistics was another critical issue, which represents one of the highest cost areas for business. "We are the most manufacturing intensive metro in the country and to support our ongoing survival, we need efficient road, rail and ports infrastructure. Our metro has a huge advantage of two ports and if these ports become more efficient and the rail corridor between the North and South becomes functional again, then we can really turn the Nelson Mandela Bay into a world-class logistics hub for imports and exports," he emphasised.

He also highlighted that climate change was a critical priority and that the Chamber is currently collaborating with various stakeholders to implement a climate change plan for Nelson Mandela Bay, to be directed at ensuring that climate change resilient infrastructure is in place and that the green economy becomes a key job generator for the Metro.

Van Huyssteen said that the past year has been an exceptionally difficult period for business and has required that the Chamber continue to pursue an activist and action-orientated approach in working with whoever will collaborate with for the greater good of our local economy. "As organised business, we do not believe that whining solves anything and that we should rather focus on what's within our control and take action where we can. On this score we are very appreciative of the high levels of volunteerism which is growing within our local business community and which is directed at pulling together to save investment and jobs."

Dotwana emphasised that all the stakeholders need to come together to form a new type of social compact. "This must be focused on re-building our country and metro for the benefit of all. There is so much potential and together we can tap into this."

Chamber President delivering his keynote address at this year's 13th Annual General Meeting.
Picture credit: Michael Sheehan

Naamsa and the Chamber establish a strategic PARTNERSHIP

Naamsa CEO Mikel Mabasa and Chamber CEO Denise van Huyssteen signing an MOU to formalise their strategic partnership.
Picture credit: Michael Sheehan

Positioning Nelson Mandela Bay as a logistics hub for the South African automotive sector is the shared objective of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber and the Automotive Business Council, naamsa, in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed today [31 May 2023].

The two business organisations have formed a strategic partnership to pursue their common interest in strengthening the logistics infrastructure and inter-connectivity of road, rail and ports, particularly the critical north-south corridor, to support the automotive industry and retain investments and jobs.

Together, they aim to leverage Nelson Mandela Bay's competitive advantage of two ports to enable the Bay to become a world-class import and export logistics hub, supporting the automotive industry as well as agriculture and other sectors.

The partnership governance structure enabled through the signed MOU will identify key strategic issues that would progressively drive port-rail integration as a source of greater modal integration and port competitiveness and increase the capacity of rail transport, for which investment in track and rolling stock is essential, naamsa Chief Executive Mikel Mabasa said.

"We share the vision and concerns of the Business Chamber regarding the survival of the automotive industry. This underpins our strategic partnership of organised business collaborating on an issue of strategic importance both locally for the metro and for the country's automotive sector as a whole. We will work with diverse teams to build new capacity among railway operators to provide them with a logistics vision that allows them to really compete with, or complement, road transport, in order to diversify the freight transport matrix" Mabasa said.

Business Chamber Chief Executive Denise van Huyssteen pointed out that close on 45% of South African automotive production emanates from the Eastern Cape, and most of it is located in Nelson Mandela Bay. Most businesses in the metro, whether directly automotive-related or not, benefit directly or indirectly from the automotive sector, she said.
"We are the most manufacturing-intensive metro in the country, and logistics represents one of the highest cost areas for business. Ensuring the survival of industry in the metro, retaining investment and protecting jobs, is reliant on improving the efficiency of the two ports, getting the north-south rail corridor functioning again and shifting freight from road to rail, as well as repairing and upgrading the road network," Van Huyssteen said.

Ensuring greater efficiency at the ports of Port Elizabeth and Ngqura will reverse the current problem of shipping lines skipping South African ports due to delays and congestion; and improve the connectivity of Eastern Cape manufacturers to foreign ports. More than 53% of vehicles exported out of South Africa are processed through the Eastern Cape and it make sense to move and concentrate our attention and future investments in supporting our local ports infrastructure.

While the Port of Durban is over-congested and Cape Town has limited opportunity for expansion, a focus on making the Bay's two ports, along with the Port of East London, made sense, Van Huyssteen said. She added that collaboration between the private sector and Transnet, including clarity on potential third-party ports and rail operations, would be essential to achieving more efficient and effective logistics linkages.

In addition to working jointly to strengthen industry participation in initiatives to improve logistics infrastructure and connectivity, naamsa and the Business Chamber will lobby together for the implementation of loadshedding mitigation measures. Additionally, a key area of mutual interest is the vital need for a sustainable transition to electric vehicle production through a clear, decisive and predictable policy environment in South Africa.

"The agreement with naamsa is strategically important for Nelson Mandela Bay and the Business Chamber, as it enables us to leverage the strength of a national organisation that shares our vision. It is in line with this new era of collaboration between individual businesses, organised business, state-owned enterprises and civil society, in which business aims to be part of the solution and to protect investments and jobs," Van Huyssteen said.

Both naamsa and the Business Chamber will support and work with Government institutions to review the existing institutional framework to address infrastructure specific challenges to address the degree of fragmentation and enhance coordination and influence across the various levels of Government [local, provincial, and national].

Chamber appoints SIX NEW BOARD MEMBERS at AGM to further strengthen its capacity

The Chamber's Board Members from Back Row: Siyolo Dick (Vice President), Alfie Jay, Celestin Ndlhovu, Prof Sibongile Muthwa, Thabo Shenxane, Khwezi Tiya, Kelvin Naidoo (Vice President), Sonja Tifloen, Paola Horak, Neil Barker, Leigh-Anne De Witt.
Front Row: Mike Neubert, Siya Mhlaluka (former Deputy President), Loyiso Dotwana (President), Denise van Huyssteen (Chief Executive Officer), and Gugu Nxiweni (Treasurer). **Picture credit: Michael Sheehan**

The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber has appointed six new board members at its 13th Annual General Meeting held at the Southern Sun, Marine Hotel, today, as part of its efforts to further strengthen its capacity and reach in achieving high priority strategic goals.

The new board members are Martina Biene, the Chairperson and Managing Director at Volkswagen Group South Africa; Siyolo Dick, Managing Director of SPAR Eastern Cape; Cumesh Moodliar, Head of Investec's Private Bank; Kelvin Naidoo, the Manufacturing and Technical Director at AutoX; Celestin Ndhlovu, Vice President for Strategy, Business Planning and Marketing at Isuzu Motors South Africa; and Christiaan Theron, currently the SA Operations Executive at Aspen Pharmaceuticals.

More about the new Board Members

MARTINA BIENE

Martina Biene, Chairperson and Managing Director of Volkswagen South Africa, has over 20 years of automotive industry experience. She began her career at Volkswagen in 2001 and held multiple roles at in the company's head office in Wolfsburg, Germany. In 2018, she was assigned to Volkswagen Group South Africa in the role of Head of Volkswagen Passenger Cars Brand. Her responsibilities included sales, marketing, dealer network management, product marketing and motorsport. In 2019, Biene steered the Volkswagen brand to achieve a 20.4% market share, which at the time, was the brand's highest since 1996.

Volkswagen is an active participant in the Chamber's task teams and clusters.

SIYOLO DICK

Siyolo Dick has built his career with the group from the ground up, starting as a freshly graduated human resources trainee in 2000. He is a seasoned executive with strong leadership experience in human resources, information technology and distribution/logistics, and an in-depth understanding of retail operations, marketing and finance.
After completing his MBA degree at Nelson Mandela University Business School in 2013, he shifted his career focus and was appointed Divisional Information Technology Director for SPAR Eastern Cape in 2015. Under his leadership, the Eastern Cape team was awarded as the best performing IT team in the SPAR group nationally for three consecutive years.

He served as Divisional Distribution Director from 2019 to October 2022, when he was appointed to his current position as Managing Director of SPAR Eastern Cape. He is currently the Chairperson of the Perseverance Cluster.

CELESTIN NDHLOVU

Ndhlovu holds a Master's in business administration from Nelson Mandela University and his career objectives are to expand his leadership responsibilities and improve organisational ability to exceed corporate goals. He is currently employed at Isuzu Motors South Africa in the position of Vice President – Strategy, Business Planning and Marketing. He will bring valuable knowledge and insights to Chamber initiatives, particularly in the transport and logistics areas.

CUMESH MOODLIAR

Cumesh Moodliar has been with Investec Private Banking since 2012, as Head of Investec Private Bank in the Eastern Cape and then National Head of Banking in 2016. He has been the Head of Private Bank) since 2018 and Head of Private Client since October 2022.

Before joining Investec, he was the managing partner at Goldberg & Villiers, an established Eastern Cape-based law firm.

He has a BA, LLB, LLM (Tax) and completed a Programme for Leadership Development (PLD) at Harvard Business School in 2015, and the Archbishop Tutu Fellowship in 2016.

He was previously a Vice President of the Chamber Board (2016-2018) and served on the Board for three years.

KELVIN NAIDOO

As an active member of the Chamber through its Task Teams and Clusters, Naidoo is aligned in terms of the Chamber's action and activist-orientated approach.

As a member of the Auto X Executive Committee, his role is flexible and requires involvement in all aspects of the business from technical to sales and marketing to finance. Major changes to the manufacturing business, product technology and product quality have been made in the fifteen years bringing the business up to date with current international standards and customer demands from the prior state of a 20-year technology lag.

He has a Bachelors and Master Degrees in Electrical Engineering and post graduate certificates in management.

CHRISTIAAN THERON

An astute and experienced manufacturing and engineering executive, Theron leads Aspen Pharmacare's operations in Nelson Mandela Bay. He has an MBA from Ashridge in the UK, including various degrees in engineering. He currently plays an active and leading role in the Chamber's service delivery interventions. He successfully led the Adopt-A-Leak initiative and together with his team, is involved in the Chamber's Task Teams, Renewable Energy and North End Clusters.

CHAMBER RECOGNISES VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO ITS PROGRAMMES

Chamber President Loyiso Dotwana congratulating Basil Mugwagwa
Picture credit: Michael Sheehan

The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber has recognised Basil Mugwagwa and Gary Koekemoer for selflessly volunteering their time in assessing and developing recommendations to address issues relating to Nelson Mandela Bay's sanitation system.

Mugwagwa is a Senior Engineer at Aspen Pharmacare and also serves as the Chamber's Water and Sanitation Task Team Lead and has been engaged in various Chamber driven water and sanitation related interventions. Koekemoer, in turn serves as WESSA Chairperson, partakes in the Water and Sanitation Task Team interventions and also serves as the Chamber's Climate Change lead.

Over the past few months, the pair have worked in tandem to undertake significant work, in partnership with the Nelson Mandela Municipality, to assess the sanitation system issues and to develop recommendations to deal with short-term and longer-term priorities. As part of the broad Adopt A MOU which has been signed between the Chamber and the Municipality, specific interventions will be undertaken in relation to the sanitation system in the coming months.

Some key successes of the Water Task team, which is led by Mugwagwa, include the establishment of an Adopt-a-School initiative, which allows member companies to help with fixing faulty or damaged plumbing systems at schools that have been identified as high water consumers. To date, 76 schools and a clinic have been adopted, and work has been completed at 53 of these schools. The recent targeted Adopt A Leak intervention, saved the Metro just under 1,6 million litres of water per day by addressing leaks in impoverished areas in the Bay.

On the Climate Change side, under Koekemoer's leadership, significant work has been undertaken to get a multi-stakeholder approach in place to enable the development of a climate resilient strategy for Nelson Mandela Bay. This entails ensuring that the Nelson Mandela Bay Climate Change Coalition, which is chaired by Dr Andrew Muir, helps to support and inform the process towards the development of implementation plans. These would ultimately cover key priorities such as long-term water and energy security, the environment (green lungs, golden beaches) and driving for a green economy.

Chamber chief executive Denise van Huyssteen says the Chamber is immensely grateful to Mugwagwa and Koekemoer for their sterling efforts, which is serving the greater good of Nelson Mandela Bay. "The Chamber is a non-profit organisation which is heavily reliant on the support and skills of volunteers to achieve its strategic goals. It is especially through outstanding volunteers like these, who are offering up their expertise and making valuable contributions, that we can as a collective make a positive impact.

Chamber President Loyiso Dotwana with Gary Koekemoer
Picture credit: Michael Sheehan

Accelerator Programme

empowers SMEs with necessary skills

The Chamber's global export accelerator programme (GEAP) which is targeted at empowering local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with necessary export skills and knowledge has reached a milestone as it culminates in a close-out event in Cape Town, in June.

This follows a highly successful and innovative Export Incubator established in 2018 as a partnership of the Employment and Skills for Development in Africa (E4D) Programme of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI).

In an effort to upscale this successful model, E4D partnered with the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber and three other chambers: the Cape Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the Pietermaritzburg & Midlands Chamber of Business as well as the JCCI. The four chambers together with the South African Supplier Diversity Council have formed the Global Export Accelerator Partnership (GEAP) funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

GEAP is aimed at stimulating job creation and enhanced business capacity of SME's to heighten their global competitiveness and ability to grow their markets internationally. The Cape Town event aims to provide SME's with the opportunity to network across Chambers at a national level and will expose them to export experts sharing insights in panel discussions. The event will also include a small exhibition space for each chamber to showcase their SME's as potential funders will be invited to view the calibre of SME's accepted onto the programme.

This comes at a time the country is facing considerable economic challenges, including stunted economic growth, high unemployment and waning interest in the country's prospects from trade and investment partners. As such, the country's export performance remains weak.

In South Africa, SMEs absorb about 60% of the employed population but contribute less than 4% to export earnings, leaving a large margin for growth. With a relatively small domestic market that is highly concentrated and competitive, SMEs have to gain international experience and look for business beyond South African borders to succeed.

"We have elevated the importance of growing local SMEs within the Chamber and to this end established an Entrepreneurship Desk, which currently has179 businesses registered with it, of which almost 80% are black owned and 56% are female owned," says Lunga Mjodo, the Chamber's Business Information Manager.

"As the Chamber, we regard GEAP as a key initiative because the focus is on stimulating job creation and promoting exports as a way to help SMEs to grow. Therefore, there is the need to boost export activity as a stimulant to economic activity and job creation, which remains a national policy priority. To this extent, SMEs are expected to function as a driving force in South Africa's social and economic stability."

The GEAP programme aimed to provide SME's with a suite of export-orientated development support ranging from training, mentoring, product development and international market research, including international market access and business linkages. Once the SME's have completed all the training offered through our training provider Global Maritime Legal Solutions, they will be entitled to receive the following certification:

1. TETA/GMLS Certificate – Import/Export Practitioners Skills Programme
2. ICC Incoterms 2020 Certificate
3. Coastline Solutions Going Global
4. AFCTA Certification

GMLS facilitated training throughout the duration of the course and the participants gained immense knowledge and skills, which will assist in growing their businesses.

Not all was too intense as these two participants enjoy a light moment.

The group was exposed to different areas to enhance their competitiveness and ability to grow its markets internationally.

The intensity of the programme provided the group with a suite of export-orientated development support ranging from training, mentoring, product development and international market research, including international market access and business linkages.

BAY COMPANY WINS
second African TECH AWARD

Gqeberha-based Jendamark Automation won technology innovation of the year for its Odin Manufacturing software at the Africa Tech Week Awards in Cape Town on Thursday evening (May 4).

This is the second award for Jendamark after it was named technology company of the year at last year's ceremony.

Innovations director Yanesh Naidoo said the award, judged by an independent panel, served as a confirmation that the manufacturing technology developed by Jendamark was meeting a real need for small to medium enterprises.

"Last year, the award was about our company, this time it's for our products, so it's a massive win for us," said Naidoo.

For South Africa and Africa to prosper, he said, a focus on building a strong manufacturing-based economy was needed.

"That's why we developed Odin Manufacturing – to help digitise and improve production efficiencies, and create opportunities for the massive human capital that we have in our country and the continent."

Jendamark's Odin Education division, which creates the tech infrastructure to bridge the digital divide in underprivileged schools, was also named a finalist in the ed-tech category.

"Although they may seem unconnected, we created Odin Education to help transform the education sector, so that young South Africans can be ready to take on this manufacturing challenge amid the rapidly accelerating pace of Industry 4.0 technologies," Naidoo said.

WINNING TECH: Jendamark Automation's innovations director, Yanesh Naidoo, celebrates the company's win in the technology innovation of the year category at the Africa Tech Week Awards in Cape Town.

COEGA's Bay Logistics Park sees automotive investor expansion

Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park (NMBLP) continues expanding. NMBLP is home to nine tenants, with combined value of R11,2 billion, creating 1,926 operational jobs with 719 jobs offered to the youth.

Research by the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA) in 2021 shows that the automotive industry contributes 4.3% to national GDP, 17.3% of the country's manufacturing output and 12.5% of South Africa's total exports.

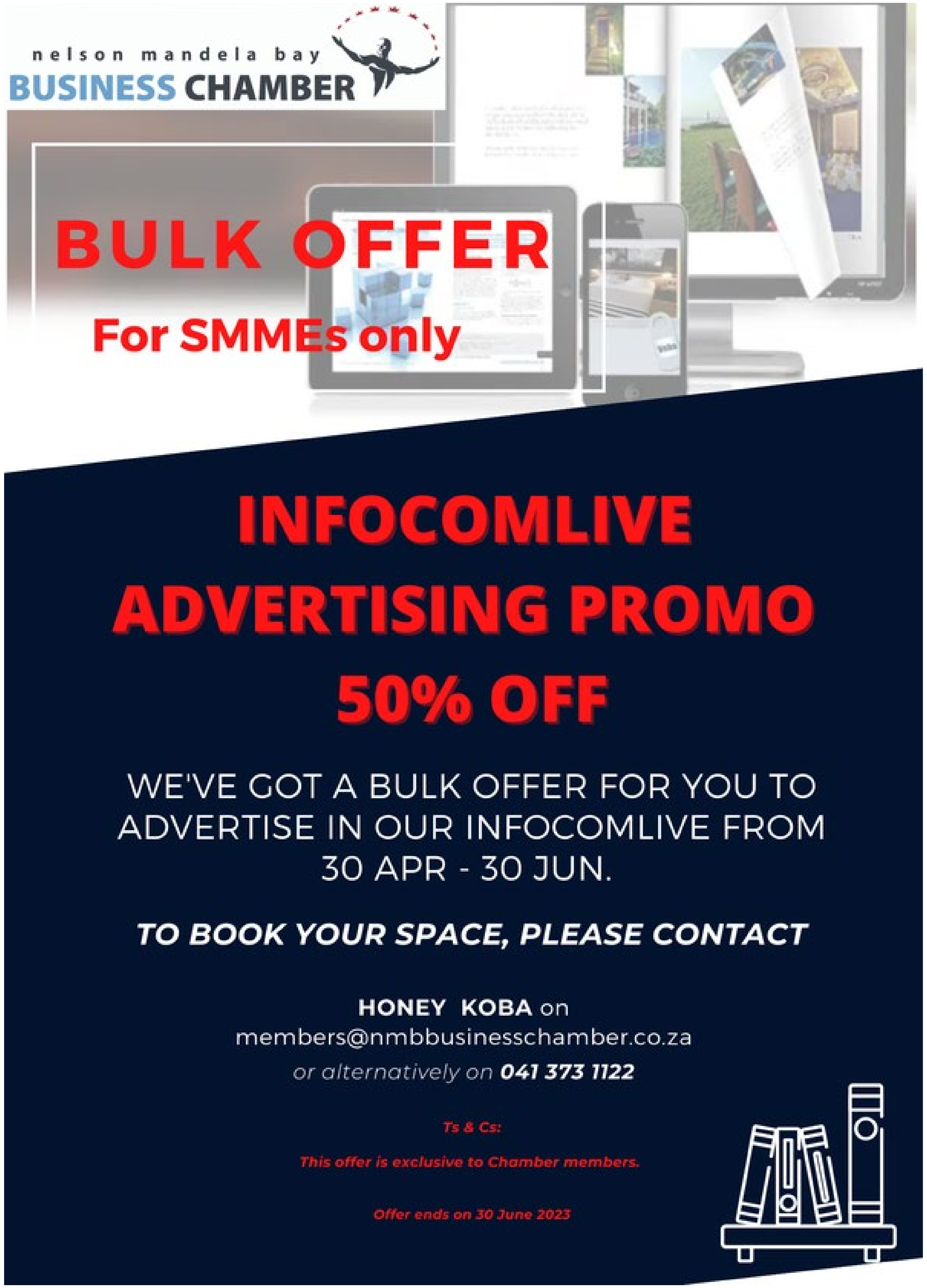
This statistic indicates that the industry is the bedrock of many South African households, with the sector employing about 110 000 people, from small component workshops to large assembly plants, such as Volkswagen which is adjacent to the Coega Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park (NMBLP) in Kariega in the Eastern Cape. The NMBLP is developed and operated by the Coega Development Corporation as an Automotive Hub along with the Coega Special Economic Zone.

The NMBLP is already proving to be the investment destination of choice for the automotive sector in the country, owing to its increasing capacity of automotive component suppliers. Notable developments in the NMBLP commenced in August 2022, and are anticipated to be completed during the current financial year, worth an estimated value of R100 million.

Currently, the NMBLP is home to nine (9) tenants, creating 1,926 operational jobs with 719 jobs offered to the youth. Existing investors comprise, Benteler Automotive, Faurecia Interior Systems, Grupo Antolin, Inergy Automotive Systems, MSC Logistics, Rehau Automotive, and ITP-SA Agro-Processing, MICB Automotive, Q-Plas Automotive, Grupo Antolin Automotive, and Schenellecke Automotive with the combined value of R11,2 billion.

Stewart Nicoll, the NMBLP Facilities Manager highlights the strategy to continuously fulfil the demands of the investors: "We ensure that we regularly engage with our tenants to understand their priorities, and our investors are long-term, which proves their satisfaction with the service we offer."

"We run major operations, and with the commencement of the new financial year, 2023/24, we intend to meet with current and potential investors to outline the future developments," concludes Nicoll.



NORTH END BUSINESS CLUSTER ROLLS OUT SERIES OF INITIATIVES TO REVAMP THE AREA

The rejuvenation of the North End business precinct remains one of the key focus areas for the North End Business Cluster in the area as it is rolling out a number of initiatives to revamp the area.

During the past few weeks, the team has been busy painting faded road markings in certain areas, as these have been neglected over the years.

This has been made possible thanks to a partnership with different role players such as Prominent Paints, Jendamark Automation, Grindstone Properties and RC Construction, who donated generously towards the success of the initiative. Prominent Paints donated all the paint, brushes and cleaning material, while Jendamark Automation provided reflective bibs for the team, and RC Construction, with the help of Grindstone Properties, provided the skilled labour which has undertaken the actual painting of the identified spots.

To ensure the team was easily iden-tifiable, the reflective bibs came in handy

North End Business Cluster chairperson James Flanagan says as the Cluster, they felt that the road markings needed to be prioritised and the team agreed on which areas would be targeted first.

"We felt that the zebra crossings and the ancillary markings needed to the prioritised first, and in particular, the zebra crossings near and around schools. The safety of our residents in North End is very high on our priority list. In addition to this, we have a lot of pedestrians in the area that have had to place their lives at risk while crossing roads," says Flanagan.

"We hope that pedestrians will now feel safer while crossing the roads and also have a visible place at which to cross the roads."

Additional work was undertaken by Aspen Pharmacare which recently completed the removal of the reeds that had engulfed the overflow culverts at the North End Lake. The culverts are essential for preventing the pollution of the lake.

"The team from Aspen Pharmacare must be commended for taking it upon themselves to adopt this initiative as it'll go a long way to address pollution in the lake, which is used as a recreational facility by the public.

Flanagan says Jendamark Automation has also been running a series of clean-up operations around their premises in York Street.

"Jendamark have, as a collective, adopted the attitude of being the change they want to see in others. It is noticeable the change that they have managed to effect in the area. As the North End Business Cluster, we encourage more businesses to adopt this same attitude and to roll up their sleeves and start by making a difference in their immediate surroundings, by picking up rubbish in and around their places of work," he says.

"We hope that by doing this, businesses will encourage each other to work together and as a collective, even possibly adopt their street and arrange collective collections of rubbish, policing of pollution and improvement initiatives of their immediate surroundings. The reality is that if business doesn't do something themselves, nothing will happen and consequently, business will suffer as a result."

Flanagan further emphasised that all stakeholders in the Metro have the ability to make a change.

He concluded: "We encourage businesses that want to undertake such initiatives to do so through the North End Business Cluster so as to avoid duplication of projects and to make use of shared resources to undertake such initiatives."

One of many areas that have been painted to ensure the safety of pedestrians using the area.


Use less water now
or have none!
No Water. No Life.
nelson mandela bay
BUSINESS CHAMBER


Youth TRADE & EXPORT
SUMMIT
15 JUNE 2023 | 08:00 - 14:00
NELSON MANDELA BAY STADIUM
Theme
"Accelerating youth economic emancipation for a sustainable future"
The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, in partnership with the Eastern Cape Development Corporation, brings you the inaugural "Youth Trade & Export Summit".
This conference and exhibition is created for young entrepreneurs, youth-owned businesses and prospective exporters to engage with trade and industry experts across import-export value chains.
LIVE
Watch the summit live on the municipal LinkedIn account, Facebook page and YouTube channel.
SCAN ME
To participate as a conference delegate or exhibitor, scan the QR code or please contact Ms Anelisa Nkwandla:
ankwandla@mandelametro.gov.za
041 503 7527
Registration is free and space is limited.
ECDC
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EXPORT
helpdesk
www.nelsonmandelabay.gov.za

Volkswagen embraces Africa growth

From left Volkswagen Ghana Chief Executive Officer, Jeffrey Peprah, Martina Biene, Chairperson and MD of Volkswagen Group South Africa, Andrew Potgieter, VWSA advisor to Ghana, Ulrich Schwabe, VWSA Production Director and Thomas Milz VWSA Sales and Marketing Director at the recent Ghana plant opening.

"Our Africa, Our Future." This is the slogan under which the African Union commemorates its 60th anniversary on Africa Day this year.

This slogan resonates strongly with Volkswagen as the company continues to grow its presence on the continent. Earlier this year, Volkswagen took over the responsibilities of the assembly facility in Ghana from its licensed importer, Universal Motors Limited. Ghana is the fourth Volkswagen assembly location in Sub-Saharan Africa after Kenya, Rwanda and South Africa, where Volkswagen has been manufacturing vehicles for over 72 years. Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) Chairperson and Managing Director, Martina Biene, is positive about Africa's growth potential. She explained that a number of African countries have introduced compelling incentive plans for locally assembled vehicles to attract OEMs like Volkswagen to invest in the development of the automotive industry on the continent. "We are encouraged by the automotive policy changes which some of the countries have implemented or in the process of implementing. These policies will help us to sell new high quality vehicles which are backed by a well-established global brand to our African customers," said Biene.

Biene added that Sub-Saharan Africa has become very important for the sustainability of Volkswagen. "The future of Volkswagen is in Africa. We are therefore accelerating our growth strategy on the continent by playing a pioneering and leading role in the development of the automotive industry," she said.

Volkswagen already has a presence in 17 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where it sells passenger and commercial vehicles through licensed importers. "We will continue to grow the Volkswagen brand in these markets and strengthen our after sales support to customers. Ongoing training is provided to technical staff at the Volkswagen locations to meet customer requirements and expectations," Biene added.

According to the African Development Bank of the world's ten fastest growing economies, five are in Africa - Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Ethiopia and Tanzania.

Biene affirmed that Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire are also two of Volkswagen's fastest growing markets. Rwanda, with an economy growing at close to 8%, shows significant potential for increased mobility solutions and electric vehicles due to its relatively young, tech-savvy population and growing middle class.

"Rwanda has been the success story of our growth plans in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is also the innovation hub of our sustainable mobility lighthouse projects on the continent. Our mobility solutions services business, which includes ride hailing and corporate car sharing, broke even last year. Rwanda was also the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to launch a Volkswagen electric vehicle with the e-Golfs," concluded Biene.

COEGA AND CSIR PARTNER TO DEVELOP SEZ BIOFIBRE HUB

The Coega Development Corporation, through its Capital Raising and Sustainability Business Units, together with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), are undertaking preparatory work towards the establishment of a Biofibre Hub, or Cluster, in the Coega Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

The Coega Development Corporation, through its Capital Raising and Sustainability Business Units, together with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), are undertaking preparatory work towards the establishment of a Biofibre Hub, or Cluster, in the Coega Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

A far-reaching Memorandum of Understanding was signed in June 2021, which forms the foundation of the partnership that will see Coega assisting the CSIR with the commercialisation and industrialisation of considerable intellectual property, while the CSIR will assist in the development of the Coega SEZ's value proposition in knowledge intensive and advanced manufacturing sectors by becoming the official Research and Development (R&D) Partner of the Corporation.

According to the CSIR Group Executive for Advanced Chemistry and Life Sciences, Dr Rachel Chikwamba, "The CSIR views this partnership as a necessary doorway to industrialisation. It supports the realisation of the many years of CSIR investment in the natural fibre and composite materials and will further enable rapid commercialisation of other technologies across the CSIR."

The co-location of advanced and viable R&D capability within an SEZ is imperative to attract foreign direct investment in knowledge intensive and advanced industrial sectors, as Meike Wetsch, Unit Head of Coega's Capital and Funding Office puts it: "This is standard practice globally. The availability of advanced R&D capability was key in the industrialisation of global technology leaders including South Korea, China, Europe, and the USA."

Wetsch adds that an industrial demonstration plant and R&D facility are already operational following the relocation of biofibre processing equipment to the Coega SEZ from the CSIR. The Project, once financed, will be further developed in Coega's Sustainability Business Unit, led by Telly Chauke, Coega's Chief Sustainability Officer.

With a total capital deployment exceeding R1bn over three phases, the Project will include a full-scale industrial manufacturing plant and incubation facilities. These will help emerging industrialists overcome critical barriers to market access.

A look inside the existing research facility, equipped with biofibre processing equipment, located at the Coega Special Economic Zone Multi-User Facility. The facility operates under the slogan "Our future is growing".

SMILES APLENTY

AS THOUSANDS TURN OUT FOR 30TH WOMEN'S CHALLENGE

Ethiopian Tadu Nare burning up the course in record time with thousands of social runners following in her wake made the 30th SPAR Women's Challenge on Saturday in Gqeberha one to remember.

The 21-year-old defending champion clocked a blistering 31:35 in the 10km Grand Prix Series race to finish 18 seconds ahead of compatriot Selam Gebre.

Umhlobo Wenene breakfast show presenter Mafa Bavuma and entertainer Gino Fabbri created the gees on the start line of the 10km and 5km runs, which took participants from Pollok Beach through the oceanside suburb of Summerstrand.

SPAR Eastern Cape advertising manager Roseann Shadrach said they were delighted with how the day unfolded and that its impact went beyond the race.

"I felt we were able to provide a stellar event, with an outstanding entertainment line-up for the participants to enjoy afterwards," she said.

With so many activities and a variety of festival fare available at the race village, the occasion was about more than just participating in an event.

"The camaraderie and traditional atmosphere were back [after Covid] and spinning around on social media, so we are thrilled with how it all turned out," said Shadrach.

She added that it had been a phenomenal effort by Nare to set a new course record in the defence of her title after missing the Cape Town leg.

"This is one of my favourite cities and I was very happy to be back here," the Ethiopian said following her impressive performance. I had been aiming for a sub-31 but was still happy with my effort. It was a wonderful win on a very good course."

Slightly down the field, some of the biggest cheers were reserved for 61-year-old Grace De Oliveira, who became only the second person to complete 100 SPAR Women's Challenge races.

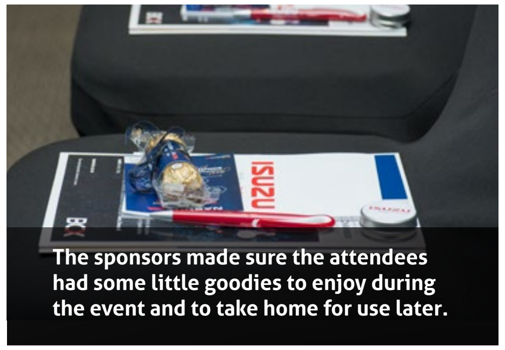
Prior to the weekend's event, only the iconic Sonja Laxton had achieved a century of races – in Johannesburg in October 2019.

De Oliveira, who won her debut SPAR race in Durban in 1992, has had an illustrious career, including representing South Africa in the marathon. She has also amassed seven gold medals in the Comrades Marathon.

"It was such a special moment to achieve the 100th event in one of my favourite races. I had goose bumps at the end and it was a wonderful moment."

In keeping with the objective of #4Smiles, proceeds from this year's SPAR Women's Challenge went to Autism EC and the Umphanda Foundation for Autism.

SPAR Grand Prix Series results: 1 Tadu Nare (Ethiopia) 31:35, 2 Selam Gebre (Ethiopia) 31:53, 3 Glenrose Xaba (SA) 32:12, 4 Blandina Makatisi (Lesotho) 32:46, 5 Cian Oldknow (SA) 32:49, 6 Kesa Molotsane (SA) 33:06, 7 Cacisile Sosibo (SA) 33:10, 8 Tayla Kavanagh (SA) 33:11, 9 Lebo Phalula (SA) 33:32, 10 Patience Murowe (Zimbabwe) 35:03.



The sponsors made sure the attendees had some little goodies to enjoy during the event and to take home for use later.

Mikel Mabasa (Naamsa CEO) was this year's guest speaker.

The AGM offers guests from various Chamber member companies an opportunity to interact beyond the event's formalities.

We would like to thank our valued sponsors for making this year's AGM a success.

Siya Mhlaluka (Transnet) and Bongani Ngema (Orion Carbon Engineering) sharing a drink with another guest.

Annual General Meeting

MAY 31

Chamber EVENTS

Sandile Phillip (FNB) and Prof Sibongile Muthwa (NMU) catching up as part of networking

Andrew Gush (Welfit Oddy) and Quinton Levey (Exporter's EC) were also guests at this year's 13th AGM.

Celestin Ndhlovu (Isuzu Motors SA), Alfie Jay (Algoa FM), Neil Barker (OM & Barker) listening deeply immersed in the day's speakers.

nelson mandela bay
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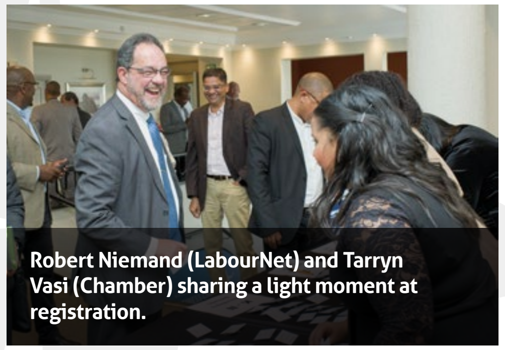
Jade Bashells receiving a certificate of service from Loyiso Dotwana, the Chamber President.

Kelvin Naidoo (Auto-X), Basil Mugwagwa (Aspen Pharmacare) and Dr Gary Koekemoer (Wessa) gracing the event with their presence.



Robert Niemand (LabourNet) and Tarryn Vasi (Chamber) sharing a light moment at registration.

Siyolo Dick (Spar EC), Kelvin Naidoo (Auto-X) and Sandile Phillip (FNB) in conversation during a light engage.

Upcoming EVENTS

MAY

JUN

13 Elevator Events

13 Market Penetration Workshop (Enterprise Development Programme)

22 ABSA SMME Business Breakfast

27 Mitigating the Energy Crisis Coffee Morning

JUL

04 Market Penetration Workshop (Enterprise Development Programme)

07 New Members Welcome

18 Mandela Day Event

AUG

Upcoming EVENTS

Upcoming EVENTS

Upcoming EVENTS

SURE (TYSHIP), or NOT?

By Warren Parker

It is common practice in business for parties to negotiate and conclude transactions online. This includes the electronic signing of the agreements governing these transactions, as well as the security documents ancillary, but pivotal, thereto.

This article focusses on the latter, the online execution of security documents, more specifically the well-known and used suretyship agreement.

In a suretyship agreement, a surety undertakes to a creditor (which could be a supplier, financier or transacting party to a transaction), to fulfil the obligations, generally in relation to payment, of a debtor (the customer, credit receiver or counterparty to the transaction) to the creditor should the debtor fail to do so.

The validity of electronic signatures is regulated by the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 ("ECT Act"). There is an important difference between a signature that appears on a normal agreement, and one that appears on a suretyship (even if they are in the same document – for instance a credit application form which incorporates a suretyship agreement). There are two reasons for this distinction.

Firstly, suretyships are regulated by Section 6 of the General Law Amendment Act, 1956 ("GLA Act"), which provides as follows:

"No contract of suretyship entered into after the commencement of this Act, shall be valid, unless the terms thereof are embodied in a written document signed by or on behalf of the surety..."

Secondly, Section 13(1) of the ECT Act provides that:

"Where the signature of a person is required by law and such law does not specify the type of signature, that requirement in relation to a data message is met only if an advanced electronic signature is used."

Therefore, section 6 of the GLA Act makes it clear that a signature is required on a suretyship. As envisaged by section 13(1) of the ECT Act, a signature is required by law, with the result that the electronic signature only qualifies if it is an advanced electronic signature.

An advanced electronic signature is a signature issued by an accredited authority in terms of section 37 of the ECT Act. In order to grant accredited advanced electronic signature status, the user must go through a face-to-face identification process with an agent of one of the authentication service providers.

In Massbuild Pty Ltd t/a Builders Express, Builders Warehouse and Builders Trade Depot v Tikon Construction CC and another [2020] JOL 48548 (GJ) (unreported case number 6986/2017), the High Court considered whether a suretyship, which had been electronically signed, met the requirements for a valid suretyship.

The signature of the surety had been appended to the suretyship agreement in the form of a picture (scan) of the handwritten signature and initials of the surety.

In this case, as the surety had signed what amounted to an electronic signature, the High Court held it as invalid as a suretyship governed by Section 6 of the GLA Act and Section 13(1) and (3) of the ECT Act, required an advanced electronic signature to be valid, which the scanned picture was not.

Therefore, if you place reliance on suretyships in the ordinary course of your business, it is important that you require an original document signed in traditional manuscript. Relying on either a digital signature, or a scanned suretyship puts you at serious risk that the signature is non-compliant and the suretyship unenforceable. The problem can be compounded when a transaction in whatever form is implemented based on a requirement that a suretyship is obtained, and it then transpires that the suretyship is invalid.

Warren is the Managing Director of Joubert Galpin Searle.

He is an attorney, notary and conveyancer and has completed a B.Com, LLB, Certificate in International Trade and Diploma in Tax. He has been admitted as a fellow of the Association of Arbitrators (Southern Africa) and is qualified to be appointed as an arbitrator to determine commercial and construction law disputes.

Warren specialises in complex commercial transactions, the formation of entities and business structures (including empowerment groups and joint ventures) and commercial disputes, with an emphasis on those relating to the application of the Companies Act.

Warren is also nationally recognised as a specialist in procurement law and he advises both government and commercial clients (particularly in the civil engineering and construction industry) on the legality of tender awards.

Member GOOD NEWS

The Neave/ Korsten Geographic Cluster has appointed its newly elected Manco to help drive its strategic goals towards addressing some of the key service delivery challenges negatively impacting businesses in the area.

From left to right: Athi Lupondwana (ROVD) - Vice Chairperson, Denise van Huyssteen (Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber), Keith Prinsloo (Auto X) - Chairperson, Paola Horak (Geographic Cluster Board Lead), Mark Bakker (Bruce McWilliams) - Co-opted Manco Member, Adrian Kemp (Perspex) – Co-opted Manco Member, and absent is Paul Johnson (Lear) – Treasurer.

The team from Joubert Galpin Searle (JGS) recently took part in Slipper Day on 05 May 2023, in aid of Reach for a Dream Foundation.

From left to right: Lenesda Botha (Secretary), Dorette Field (Secretary), Shakira Ahmed (Senior Associate) and Cassandra Erasmus (Secretary).

Orion Engineered Carbons in NMB Hosts Bursary Beneficiaries

Orion recently hosted 17 students from the Nelson Mandela University who are beneficiaries of their bursary support program. The students are from the local disadvantaged communities where unemployment is high resulting in parents not being able the fund their children's education.

The aim of the engagement was to introduce the students to Orion and provide them with an overview of our manufacturing process. Nomfundo Faltein, Managing Director emphasized the role that business in supporting the upliftment of further education. The students also had an opportunity to share their experiences.

Ncedisa Ndlongwana said, "some of us do not have parents or many do not have money for basic needs, but Orion brought hope to all of us".

The students each received a small gift and enjoyed lunch with the Orion team.

Welcome NEW MEMBERS

About the company
Situated in Kariega, The company manufactures structures and chassis components for numerous OEMs.

BENTELER makes it happen

Reason we joined
To join the various task teams and clusters for a stable environment. To also connect with other businesses in the Metro to gain an in-depth understanding of what is happening Nelson Mandela Bay.

Cleber Rossini
Plant Director

About the company
Transport services- Employee | Transport Contract
Airport Transfers | Training and skills development
Consulting in team manufacturing | Enterprise Development
Training | Coaching | Mentorship

CHUMILE HOLDINGS
Perfomance Driven, Purpose Led!

Reason we joined
Business Growth through networking with other companies, sharing ideas and resources.
I want my company to contribute to the economic development of our city.

About the company
Accurate Accounting is a professional accounting firm that provides bookkeeping and accounting services to small and medium-sized businesses.

ACCURATE ACCOUNTING
Our Clients Books Balance

Reason we joined
To be part of the Bay's business community.

About the company
Electronics, electrical and Industrial engineering supplies.

ewaku

Reason we joined
To unlock opportunities and an understanding of business developments within the Bay.

About the company
Celistax is a 100% black-owned company. We are in the transport & tourism/ travel sector. We are based in kwaMagxaki, Nelson Mandela Bay.

CELISTAX PTY LTD

About the company
We are an ICT Professional service provider based in EasternCape located in Gqeberha. We provide services such as technical support, IT Project Management wireless services, etc.

BANZOTYPE TECHNOLOGIES

Reason we joined
To Grow the business. To keep awareness of the business and encourage customers to do business with us. To promote relationships with other businesses.

About the company
Specialise in leisure & business travel requirements. Flights, holiday houses. Accommodation, visas, car reservations and travel insurance.

Reason we joined
Networking opportunities, build brand awareness, make business contacts, receive chamber newsletters, and to increase visibility in the community.

XL BAY TRAVEL

About the company
Friends of Van Stadens is a non-profit company supporting the conservation and socio-economic efforts and development of the Van Stadens Wildflower Reserve, its communities and stakeholders.

Reason we joined
Connecting, networking and collaboration with stakeholders of NMBM to enhance conservation, support climate change interventions, develop the conservation and tourism economy of the city, and its natural spaces and environs.

FOVS

About the company
Manufacturing of automotive components.

UNIFRAX

About the company
Bookkeeping and accounting services.

Reason we joined
To grow my business skills and market my busness.

BATHULILE CONSULTING

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STANDARD BANK FREE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Thinkubate is a free skills development programme brought to you by Standard Bank together with Thinkroom.

Thinkroom works with large public and private organisations to deliver business skills training, mentorship, business accelerator and incubation services. It also offers enterprise development funding.

FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMME ARE:

- Learning paths comprise a combination of eleven training modules
- Training is conducted by subject experts who are also business owners themselves and focus on applied skills.
- Training is 100% online in the form of webinars, and supporting materials.

BENEFITS OF THINKUBATE:

- Get the skills needed to manage your business more efficiently, profitably and competitively.
- It's free to Standard Bank Enterprise Banking clients
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- Receive a certificate of completion

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- AUTOX
- ISUZU With you, for the long run

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- ALEXANDERFORBES
- KPMG
- AON Empower Results
- dimension data
- MANDELA BAY THEATRE COMPLEX
- Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa
- Sarah Baartman DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
- NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

BLUE partners

- THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
- ROSEBANK COLLEGE
- OLDMUTUAL
- IDC Your partner in development finance
- BCX
- mandela bay DEVELOPMENT AGENCY RENEW • REVIVE • INSPIRE
- MARSH
- EY Building a better working world
- mazars
- BASF We create chemistry
- ARENA HOLDINGS
- Black Umbrellas
- pps

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