

TREADS DIGITAL

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BANDAG SA ON WHY RETREADING REMAINS A SAVVY COST-SAVING SOLUTION

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TO HAVE
YOUR SAY!**

Navigating global regulations
for retreading

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Editor's Corner

With sustainability and protecting the environment uppermost in everyone's mind, the focus in this issue, is on retreading – which despite experiencing a steady decline over the last decade – remains an important cost-effective way for transport fleets to reduce operating costs, while also doing their bit for the environment.

We bring you a thought-provoking feature - courtesy of Retreading Business - that provides a global overview on the commercial retreading sector, by continent. Upon closer inspection, it appears that, despite its many benefits, retreading is decreasing, at risk due to a variety of factors, all of which are outlined in our feature story.

The South African retreading market is no exception, facing its own share of challenges, some of which share commonality with overseas markets. Our exclusive interview with Bandag SA refers to them, simultaneously pointing out that where there are challenges, there are also opportunities for those who can respond and adjust

to the current market trends and dynamics in a speedy manner. How Bandag SA has risen to the challenge by continuing to reinvent policy, products and service offering over the last 20 years, makes for a fascinating and inspirational read.

Do take part in our interactive poll, on page 15 to share your views on retreading and whether you believe it has a crucial role to play.

And of course, you can catch up on the usual mix of local and international stories doing the rounds, sourced from local and international media and contributing journalists.

Yours in tyres



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BANDAG SA

ON WHY RETREADING

REMAINS A SAVVY

COST-SAVING SOLUTION

Bandag Southern Africa recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, having gained home rule from Bandag Incorporated (a USA company, founded in 1957) in 2004, operating as an independent entity since then. Bandag has been operating in South Africa since 1965 marking another milestone for the organisation – its 60th anniversary. Having defied immense odds amid a challenging retreading market and standing the real risk of losing the Bandag brand, the management team – John Laskarides, Laurent Colrat and Jonathan David – sat down with SA TREADS for a candid interview, to detail the reasons behind their ongoing growth and success, and their plans and ambitions for the company in the years ahead.

Following on your annual Conference in September, which we believe was a huge success, what was the overall message you shared with your dealer network, and how was it received?

Our primary message was that quality retreading in the TBR sector is here to stay, for the simple reason that it remains a cost viable option for South Africa's transport fleets.

How did you go about conveying the message?

We presented a comprehensive 10-year case study (2014-2024), that revealed the effect of the cheap new tyres coming in from Asia, with 2014 being a milestone year, as it was the first time imported TBR tyres overtook sales of legacy products here in South Africa.

And, in 2024 imports of new tyres accounted for a staggering 77% of sales across the country. Over this same period, we have seen a 25% decline in the retreadability of casings coupled with a rise in the number of tyres that get scrapped in its first life.

Interestingly, the TBR market has

mushroomed, with the years 2023/24 recording an explosive growth of 8.65%. Based on reports, Chinese tyre imports accounted for 28% of the growth, while retreading declined by 3%. It is interesting to note that while tyre demand has increased, in the same period, diesel sales and fleet mileage have both reduced. Together with the decrease in retreadability, this does leave us to believe that the increase in unit sales may be driven by inferior quality import truck tyres.

There is no doubt that the onslaught of cheap new tyres coming in from Asia, is having a profoundly negative effect on the retreading sector. Notwithstanding, as far we are concerned, Chinese tyres, are not the enemy. The quality of some of these imports is. The majority of these low-cost tyres coming in from Asian countries, is simply not suitable for retreading, with the casings being of low quality.

This poses a threat to us, because quality retreading needs a quality tyre, which explains why stock retreading has dropped dramatically. As Bandag SA, one of the ways that we combat

In 2024 imports of new tyres accounted for a staggering 77% of sales across the country.



Bandag R-Drive 001+ Retread.

this is by promoting premium legacy brands and certain Chinese brands that we believe are retreadable (based on our testing and data collection) and will provide our fleet customers with the optimum cpk benefit.

So, how are you meeting this challenge?

By providing a complete solution to fleets that includes new tyres, retreading plus after-sales service. It's not easy, but by conducting consistent fleet tyre inspections (we carry out more than 100 000 per month), we have managed to gather sufficient data that includes the individual performance of the more than 100 Chinese tyre brands currently in the market, to identify the best from the worst. Bear in mind, not all Chinese tyres are made equal. The Chinese manufacturers are quickly catching up to western manufacturers, with some Chinese brands

now exhibiting similar quality standards.

Chinese tyre brands are here to stay, and we need to accept that, while learning to become more discerning.

When it comes to our dealers, and because we will never consider joining the generic market, we announced the creation of a central data base, set up for the express purpose of gathering data on each of these brands, which our dealers can access.

We cannot dictate to them when it comes to the new TBR products and brands they sell, but we are hoping the scientific data gathered will prompt them to get behind the more credible Asian brands, which can be retreaded.

This is not only important for their survival, but also for the country's transport fleets.

We recently conducted an exercise with one of our major national fleets which revealed that were they to run on



We have gathered sufficient data that includes the individual performance of the more than 100 Chinese tyre brands currently in the market.



new tyres exclusively, it would cost them an additional R7.7million thus showing that retreading delivers real economic return to the fleets !

Demonstrating the undisputable benefits of tyre retreading to the fleets, is something we will continue to pursue, vigorously. Our proximity to our customers allows us to provide tailor-made solutions that provide real cost savings using quality driven and reliable Bandag products, made right here in South Africa.

We are seeing a significant decline in fleet maintenance, which is essential to achieving a desired c.p.k. to keep their tyre costs from soaring, which is why we station our own fitters on site, to ensure the basics of tyre maintenance are not neglected and also to collect data which helps us to help our fleet customers to better manage their tyres and maintain their tyre costs.

What else do you believe differentiates you from your competitors?

Aside from investing in the new data base, products and people (we now employ more than 200), we have invested over R149million in our plant over the last few years, including solar panels, to ensure a streamlined operation during power cuts.

Another distinguishing feature is that we are Proudly South African, which precures a measure of loyalty to us. The corporate-cum-entrepreneurial culture we employ further allows us to remain flexible and agile, with the three of us at senior management level, able to make swift decisions.

More important, we are not only a supplier of precured rubber, but rather, a solutions-provider to the fleets. For us, it's not about selling more rubber, but about proving the reliability and performance of our products and services, that ultimately translate into savings for them.

We strive to build and nurture our relationships with our customers, which is paying dividends for us, with two of our

national fleets recently renewing their contracts, and new prospects on the horizon.

What assistance do you offer to your dealer network?

We would not be where we are today without the support and loyalty of our dealers, most of whom have been with us from the very beginning. To demonstrate our loyalty and protect their existence, we will also get involved in other aspects crucial to the market, such as waste tyres, anti-dumping legislation and the like.

Having been recently nominated and accepted onto the Waste Tyre Committee, we are spending copious amounts of time negotiating a favourable industry solution with the Waste Bureau and Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).

Bear in mind (by the very nature of their business), retreaders are also recyclers, so it is in our interests to ensure that we arrive at a stand-alone, independent waste tyre plan, and that the waste tyre levy paid over by the consumer, is correctly used for collecting and disposing of scrap tyres.

What is happening to all the scrap tyres that are being collected, seeing that the landfills are no longer accepting them?

That is a good question, and one that demands closer investigation. We have it on good authority that a considerable number are being shipped to India, for use in pyrolysis plants. This is of concern, as many tyres being relegated to the scrap tyre heap, could in fact be retreaded, which would greatly assist the retreading sector.

DFFE is aware of these allegations, and we are working together to get to the bottom of it.

Apart from the lack of quality casings



For us, it's not about selling more precured rubber, but rather, a solutions-provider to the fleets.





The new R-Drive 001+ pattern topped sales in September.



available for retreading, what other challenges is the retreading segment facing?

The contracting nature of the economy is of massive concern for all, manufacturers included, as the recent closure of the Goodyear plant demonstrates.

Gross Domestic Production (GDP), a fluctuating foreign exchange, political instability, BEE, as well as a mentality towards a South African review globally, are all impacting gravely. The question now, is how best to position ourselves to grow, despite all these factors, over which we have little to no control.

We see legacy manufacturers closing tyre plants all over the world. This is

a global trend, but for Bandag SA, manufacturing is our business, and we are here to stay.

Continuing to invest in our Plant , ensuring compliance by way of eight ISO accreditations, and our ability to export to anywhere in the world, stands us in good stead. Not only do we have the capacity, expertise and flexibility to export, our willingness and capability to meet foreign demands with respect to compounds and designs, will further serve to preserve our presence and legacy here in South Africa.

Will you be releasing any new products into the market?

At our Conference, we announced the official launch of two new patterns, the R-Drive 001+ and the R-Trailer 002. Interestingly, the R-Drive 001+ following 3million kilometers of testing, to ensure the pattern was right for South African fleet applications, topped sales in September, thereby proving it is worth its mettle.

Any final thoughts?

Although South Africa constitutes only one percent of the global tyre market, we are a retread friendly country that that is home to two of the largest TBR retreading factories in the world, one of which is a Bandag franchisee..

We attribute this incredible achievement to our indomitable spirit – the South African DNA that is not afraid to take on challenges, that propels us to reinvent ourselves, whenever the occasion demands it.



Bandag R-Trailer 200 Retread.

Bandag Southern Africa (SA) became a licensee of Bandag International on 01 December 2004. The company became a South African business by way of a management buyout and continues to operate under this structure. In December 2006, Bandag and Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc. announced a merger that would make Bandag a wholly owned subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas. Bandag SA remains independent and continues to be part of the global Bandag brand together with its global standards.



**Puzzling?
It shouldn't be.**
**A Data-Driven Reality Check
About Cheap Tyres**

Are you saving money with cheap imported tyres? Think again! Our latest data analysis reveals a stark reality: the short-term gains of 'affordable' tyres are costing you more in the long run.

The numbers don't lie

Our research shows that the influx of cheap imported tyres in Southern Africa has led to:

- A 25% decline in truck and bus tyre retreadability over the past decade due to non-retreadable tyres
- A surge in new tyre sales (driven by cheap imported tyres), resulting in increased waste and environmental concerns
- Reduced transporter uptime due to more frequent tyre failures
- Reduced tyre mileage, impacting your bottom line

Invest in quality, not just price

At **Bandag**, we believe that quality tyres are worth the investment. Our retread tyres are designed to provide:

- Improved tyre lifespan of quality new tyres
- Enhanced performance and safety
- Reduced waste and environmental impact

Make the smart choice

Don't let cheap tyres cost you more in the long run. Choose quality, choose reliability, choose **Bandag**.

With Bandag you don't have to be a tyre expert. You just have to know one! **Bandag** specialises in the manufacture of retreads and best-in-class after sales service. That's what we do.
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NAVIGATING THE GLOBAL

REGULATORY LANDSCAPE FOR RETREADING

Courtesy of www.retreadingbusiness.com

The global truck and bus tyre retreading industry is undergoing a pivotal transformation this year. We opened 2025 by asking if there was a year of upheaval ahead for the industry. It was a pertinent question at the time.

Still, the outlook has somewhat solidified six months later as the global retreading sector looks to navigate challenges that are not purely business-related, but are now becoming so much more complex due to the plethora of regulations being put in place that, outside of day-to-day operation, sometimes need a degree in public policy to decode. If operating conditions weren't tough enough, rules, regulations, tariffs, compliance and duties are now part of the retreaders' lexicon like never before. Seismic shifts in the tyre industry are underway, and retreading is right at the forefront.

Increasingly divergent regulatory approaches across key regions are shaping our industry like never before. What is often called for by the industry, regulation, and schemes to promote an essential, sustainable practice that should be at the forefront of everyone's minds has become a double-edged sword, bringing complexity, confusion, and often the opposite of any intended consequence to aid a tough-to-operate-in industry.

While sustainability and economic resilience remain common goals globally, the policies being adopted, ranging from market liberalisation to green-finance alignment, are generating a fragmented regulatory environment that demands strategic regional adaptation. In this edition, we've already taken a look at the complexities of the recent spate of changes driven by disparate EU policy making, but we wanted to look at how this confusion isn't solely a European issue, we wanted to do a comparative analysis of developments from the past few months across Europe, the United States, South America, and Southeast Asia, offering critical insights for stakeholders navigating this evolving landscape.

EUROPE: TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

In Europe, retreading has evolved not only as an economic option but also as an agenda. A key milestone was seemingly

reached in June 2025, when the European Commission confirmed that retreaded tyres qualify as "taxonomy compliant" under the EU Taxonomy Regulation. This clarification aimed to remove a major barrier to their adoption in sustainability driven procurement and investment strategies, particularly among public fleets and ESG-conscious enterprises. However, as you've read in other areas of this edition, not all was as clear-cut as initially expected.

Beyond taxonomy alignment, policy advocacy is intensifying. EuRIC's May 2025 manifesto outlines an ambitious vision for a circular-tyre economy. Key proposals include mandatory targets for recycled content, EU-wide end-of-waste criteria, and the introduction of Digital Product Passports (DPPs) to enhance traceability and transparency.

However, tensions may arise between recycling oriented eco-design policies and retreading's reliance on durable casings. Policymakers will need to strike a careful balance between these goals to avoid undermining the reuse segment of the circular economy. Research has clearly shown that the 3Rs are essential for a sustainable tyre ecosystem (reduce, reuse,

If passed, H.R. 3401 would offer fleet operators a tax credit of up to 30 per cent of the purchase price for domestically retreaded commercial tyres, capped at \$30 per tyre, for tyres placed in service between 2026 and 2028.

Available data shows little evidence of a meaningful revival in retread activity.

recycle), cutting out any one of these elements severely undermines the aims of sustainability.

Still, regulatory confusion may, in fact, not be what we, as the second 'R', were looking for in recent regulation changes. Unlike in some regions, European retreaders continue to benefit from trade defence mechanisms.

The European Union's January 2025 decision to impose anti-dumping and countervailing duties on Chinese tyre imports was intended to stabilise the market and protect domestic producers by establishing a price floor for low-cost imports. However, the anticipated boost to the retreading sector has not materialised.

Available data shows little evidence of a meaningful revival in retread activity, suggesting that the industry's concerns about the limited impact of these measures are well-founded. As Vaculug's Jorge Crespo pointed out in February when we spoke to him: "Legislation has to be more inclusive, more focused on incentives. We could get there, but we're going the long way round. Europe needs to lead by example, and it's not about penalising; it's about incentivising".

Ironically, the recent furore seems to have

only exacerbated this perception among many and, although the Taxonomy legislation is new, the figures for Q12025 don't look fantastic, according to ETRMA: "In the Truck tyre category, the volume in the first quarter was very weak at -4% versus the same quarter of 2024 and -11% compared with the pre-pandemic first quarter of 2019. This category is significantly affected by economic and political uncertainties". European retreading needs some clarity from governments, and the opposite seems to be what they're getting.

UNITED STATES: FISCAL INCENTIVES, INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY AND PROTECTIONISM SEEM TO BE WORKING

The United States, despite the trade chaos it is causing outside of the US, is adopting a markedly different stance on retreading, which most operators are welcoming. It is treating retreading not merely as an environmental tool, but as a matter of industrial policy and supply chain resilience, maybe in the face of more isolationist policies being enacted more broadly.

In May 2025, a bipartisan effort to support





the sector took shape with the reintroduction of the Retreaded Tire Jobs, Supply Chain Security, and Sustainability Act (H.R. 3401). Spearheaded by Representatives Darin LaHood (R-IL) and Emilia Sykes (D-OH), the bill aims to stimulate domestic demand for retreaded tyres through two key provisions: a targeted federal tax credit and a procurement mandate for federal fleets. The proposed legislation has gained support from major industry players, including Goodyear, Bridgestone and the US Tire Manufacturers Association (USTMA), all of whom view it as a much-needed response to the long-term decline of the US retreading sector. It almost feels like this was the sort of legislation EU retreaders were looking for, but recent legislation fell short of what the US is proposing.

If passed, H.R.3401 would offer fleet operators a tax credit of up to 30 percent of the purchase price for domestically retreaded commercial tyres, capped at \$30 per tyre, for tyres placed in service between 2026 and 2028. In addition, the bill would require federal agencies to prioritise retreaded tyres over new, non-retreadable options, provided suitable alternatives are available.

According to Anne Forristall Luke, President

and CEO of the USTMA, the bill represents a critical opportunity to strengthen the sector.

"Approximately 15 million tyres are retreaded annually in the US, including nearly 44 per cent of commercial truck tyres in the US and Canada; she said. "By providing tax credits to fleet purchasers who buy American-made retreaded commercial tyres, we have a critical opportunity to support domestic manufacturing and strengthen our national economy."

Luke highlighted that retreading plays a central role in American remanufacturing, supporting over 51,000 direct jobs and more than 268,000 across the broader tyre industry. Most retreading businesses in the US are small, independent operations, typically employing between 10 and 60 people. However, the sector's competitiveness has been undermined by the influx of imported tyres, around 65 per cent of which are deemed unsuitable for retreading due to their construction.

Strategically, the bill positions retreading as an instrument of economic security. By leveraging tax incentives and federal purchasing power, H.R.3401 seeks to tip the

scales in favour of domestic retreaders, particularly smaller fleets that are more sensitive to upfront costs. In doing so, the legislation reframes retreading as not just a sustainable alternative but a strategic asset for national resilience. This is in addition to the numerous tariffs and anti-dumping duties being imposed on some of the largest tyre-importing nations to the US, as well as transshipment tariffs on countries like Vietnam, aimed at stemming the flow of Chinese-manufactured tyres. As of mid-2025, the complex and multi-layered series of tariffs on imported tyres remains somewhat opaque.

In our first edition of the year, we noted that it was a little too soon to call any effects. However, what we're currently seeing is a benefit for retreaders. In the first quarter of 2025, US imports of truck and bus tyres from China and Thailand dropped by 7% and 10% respectively, reflecting the impact of anti-dumping and counter-vailing duties. While other countries not subject to such tariffs have stepped in to fill the gap, the broader tariff landscape has led to price increases on new tyres of up to 10%, citing rising costs of both finished goods and raw materials, such as natural rubber. As a result, retreaded tyres are gaining ground as a more affordable alternative, with market forecasts indicating strong growth for the US retreading sector in 2025.

Approximately 15 million
tyres are retreaded annually
in the USA.

In Argentina, a flood of low-cost imports, many of which are unsuitable for retreading, has triggered a 30-35% decline in business, nationwide.

SOUTH AMERICA: STAGGERINGLY DIVERGENT POLICIES

While the EU seems to be delivering a lack of clarity, and the US retreading sector is moving in very positive directions, South America continues to be somewhat of a proving ground for massively divergent approaches to retreading, presents a volatile mix of policy extremes, serving almost as a real-time laboratory for the global retreading industry.

We have covered the specifics of South America's variety of approaches to retreading in detail elsewhere in this issue. To summarise, the continent simultaneously demonstrates three profoundly different governance approaches: deregulation, targeted fiscal stimulus, and data-driven climate policy, with very real and direct consequences for local players that stand in sharp contrast to their regional neighbours, let alone the rest of the world.

In Brazil, the world's second-largest retread market, the industry faces a severe threat from a proposed ban on the use of retreaded tyres on federal highways. The bill, introduced in late 2024, has triggered strong opposition from the Brazilian Association of Tyre Retreading (ABR), which argues that the measure is misguided. ABR asserts that retreaded tyres meet rigorous safety standards and contribute significantly to cost savings and job creation, warning that the ban could jeopardise 300,000 jobs. At the same time, legislative steps to support the sector are being proposed. The Senate recently approved Bill PL 2470/2022, which Retreading Business covered back in 2023, aims to exempt retreading services and equipment purchases from key federal taxes.

The bill, now under review in the Chamber of Deputies, has been accompanied by growing institutional recognition, including the establishment of a national "Retreaders' Day" and formal acknowledgement from the Ministry of Environment of the contribution of retreading to the circular economy.

Argentina, by contrast, is experiencing aggressive economic liberalisation, which has created a challenging environment for retreaders. Import duties on new tyres have been cut from 35% to 25%, with further reductions planned, while reference pricing has been eliminated. The result is a flood

of low-cost imports, many of which are unsuitable for retreading, triggering a 30-35% decline in business nationwide. Prices have plunged to as low as \$90 per retread, fuelling a race to the bottom that threatens quality and safety standards.

The Argentine Retreaders Association (ARAN) is responding with efforts to re-professionalise the sector, advocating for technical regulations and fiscal incentives, and working with regional partners such as ALARNEU to harmonise quality standards across Latin America. Chile, meanwhile, has proven to be a leading light in the global industry, breaking new ground by integrating retreading directly into its national climate policy. A study commissioned by CINC and ARNEC, and independently verified by KPMG, found that a treaded tyre generates 1.147 kgCO₂l/kg-compared to 6.56 kgCO₂fu/kg for an imported new tyre. These figures will be incorporated into Chile's HuellaChile emissions platform from July 2025, allowing fleets that use retreads to report significantly lower carbon footprints.

The move is expected to unlock access to green procurement contracts and climate-related tax incentives, reinforcing retreading as a tool for both sustainability and competitiveness.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE RETREADING CANARY IN THE MINE

While some advancements are being made in Southeast Asia (SEA), it remains a notable example of what could happen to the rest of the retreading industry without the hard work and collaboration between governments, the industry, and dedicated legislation to protect it. The flood gates always feel open in SEA, and the retreading sector often feels, with a few exceptions, that it has given up and is waiting to be engulfed.

The industry's negative perception in the region has recently been exacerbated by a spate of truck accidents for which retread tyres have been wrongly blamed. Some, like in Brazil, are calling for bans on TBR retreads. With a highly fragmented regional landscape, plagued by a lack of transparency, it often falls to Malaysia, which has the most professionally organised retreading sector in

the region, to be the champion of retreading in Southeast Asia. However, we are also now seeing some moves from Indonesia to professionalise their market, with some recent global collaborations cementing their desire to drive progress.

Alongside much negativity, progress is still being made. Malaysia plans to introduce QR codes and RFID tags on retreaded tyres to combat counterfeit products, with support from the local Ministry of Transport. Meanwhile, Vietnam and the Philippines are aligning their national standards with UNECE Regulations under the 1958 Agreement, and both countries are working to align standards for retreaded tyres under R108 and R109 as part of this ongoing harmonisation roadmap.

Vietnam has also enacted an EPR law requiring tyre manufacturers and importers to recycle at least 5 per cent of their products. This is expected to formalise casing supply and strengthen the retreading sector; however, the effects on the local industry are not only unknown but may be unknowable. A certain level of regional collaboration, as seen in Latin America, is becoming increasingly essential to protect the SEA retreading industry; however, no operator or nation appears willing to take the lead in establishing this. In Europe, the US, and parts of South America, efforts are underway to stem the flow of unretreadable tyres or improve the quality of the global casing supply.

In contrast, SEA is an open floodgate to cheap, poor-quality tyres, with a race to the bottom seemingly unavoidable. This has huge repercussions for the industry, as it's stuck in a vicious cycle of reduced quality to remain price-competitive. This, in turn, causes an even worse perception of retreads, which has a more significant impact on local regulation than any specific facts coming from the industry itself. With a lack of a strong local new-tyre industry, the retreading sector is largely on its own in SEA, not engaging with governments and legislation formation in any particularly meaningful way.

External factors affecting SEA also include steep US tariffs on ASEAN tyre exports, particularly affecting Vietnam and Thailand, prompting manufacturers to redirect their products to local markets, which creates an oversupply of cheap new tyres. Again, regulation doesn't seem to be an option.



External factors affecting SEA also include steep US tariffs on ASEAN tyre exports, particularly affecting Vietnam and Thailand, prompting manufacturers to redirect their products to local markets, which creates an oversupply of cheap new tyres. Again, regulation doesn't seem to be an option.

INDIA: REGULATION-LED STRUCTURING OF THE RETREADING SECTOR

India has recently introduced a series of regulatory reforms aimed at formalising and improving standards within its tyre retreading industry. Unlike the incentive-based approach seen in the United States or the taxonomy-linked framework developing in Europe, India's strategy is primarily regulation driven, focusing on environmental compliance and product quality.

The most significant development is the inclusion of tyre retreading within the scope of the Hazardous and Other Waste (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2022. This legislation recognises retreading as an approved method for managing end-of-life tyres and brings it formally under the country's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regime.

Under the EPR framework, tyre producers and importers are required to recover a set percentage of the tyres they place on the market. To meet these obligations, they can now purchase EPR credits not only from recyclers but also from registered retreaders. In turn, retreaders are required to register

“SEA is an open floodgate to cheap, poor quality tyres, with huge repercussions for the industry.”

It is worth noting that Africa and the ME are becoming more active in the retreading space.

with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and report their activities through a national online portal. Each tyre processed generates a retreading certificate, creating a traceable system that links retreading output directly to compliance targets for manufacturers.

A Gazette notification issued in March 2024 has reinforced these requirements, mandating monthly reporting of retreading volumes. Around 800,000 tyres were retreaded under the new framework in the past year, indicating early engagement from formal sector operators, even though the retreading sector is still growing primarily in the 'informal' sector, as it's known in India.

Alongside these environmental measures, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has introduced mandatory certification for retreaders. This applies to the entire retreading process, encompassing the materials used, workshop procedures, and the performance of the finished product.

All retreaders operating within the formal system are now required to comply with BIS standards covering tread rubber specifications, process control measures, and product testing. The aim is to ensure that retreaded tyres meet defined safety and performance benchmarks, reducing variability in quality across the market.

Together, the introduction of the EPR mechanism and the enforcement of BIS quality standards represent a more structured approach to managing tyre retreading in India. The reforms aim to enhance the sector's profile, enhance its environmental impact, and address safety concerns associated with unregulated operations.

While implementation challenges remain, particularly in transitioning the large informal sector, India's regulatory framework now provides a clearer foundation for developing a more accountable and consistent retreading industry.

India is also a market that can sustain itself, meaning it isn't as affected by external factors, which is proving to be a huge benefit to the local retreading industry.

A MULTI-FACETED FUTURE FOR RETREADING

The global regulatory trajectory for tyre retreading is no longer convergent. Such disparate regional approaches are creating

a varied set of pressures on retreaders, especially those operating across multiple jurisdictions.

For these businesses, staying compliant now requires not only operational efficiency but also a growing understanding of local environmental policy, trade law, and certification schemes. Retreading has always been part of the global supply chain, but that interconnectedness is now adding new layers of complexity.

This fragmentation is also prompting companies to explore opportunities in emerging markets, where regulation may be lighter but demand for cost-effective tyre solutions is rising.

While this article has focused on developments in Europe, the United States, South America, Southeast Asia and India, it's worth noting that Africa and the Middle East are also becoming more active in the retreading space.

These regions could offer future growth opportunities, especially if lessons from more mature markets help inform their regulatory development.

Interestingly, the lack of consistency in global regulation does not appear to be halting the broader momentum behind retreading. In many cases, it is simply reshaping where and how progress occurs. Some markets are turning to fiscal incentives, others to environmental compliance, and a few to regional harmonisation. The result is a complex, shifting landscape—one that continues to challenge assumptions but also demonstrates the resilience of the retreading sector.

As the regulatory picture evolves, clarity and coordination—at least at the regional level—will be critical. For now, retreading remains caught between policy ambition and practical implementation.

Yet, despite the differences, there is a shared recognition across markets: retreading has a central role to play in building a more sustainable and cost-effective tyre ecosystem. How that role is supported will determine its future impact.

Have YOUR SAY...

Do you believe retreading remains an important cost solution for the TBR market? *



[CLICK HERE TO VOTE](#)



YES



NO



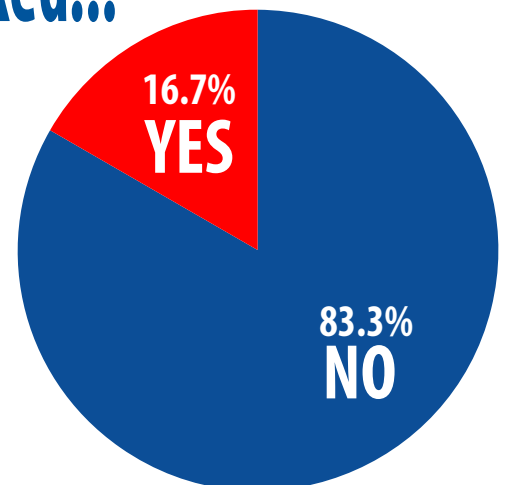
UNSURE

Results will be published in our next edition. *NB - Your identity will remain confidential.

In our previous issue, we asked...

We asked what are your thoughts on Run-flat tyres? As South African motorist/tyre dealer, would you prefer them as original fitment, or not?

HERE ARE THE RESULTS...





Bandag/BTS Conference 2025

Bandag's 2025 franchise conference was this year held at Pezula Nature Retreat. Over 120 people attended this year's conference and Gala Awards Evening.

To celebrate the many giants of the tyre industry who are also part of the Bandag franchise network, our theme for this year's conference was - **Legends are Made.**

Bandag launched two new tread patterns at this year's business conference. R-Drive 001+ and R-Trailer 002. Following months of product testing across multiple fleets and

millions of kilometres, both R-Drive 001+ and R-Trailer 002 have proved to deliver the best mileage performance, durability and versatility across different applications.

Bandag products are seen as the benchmark and with the exceptional performance of the R-Drive 001+, Bandag has reaffirmed its dominance in the drive segment.

The introduction of innovation continued as a refreshed version of ProApp was launched which included some new features such as the brand number verification feature in ProTurbo. Bandag's new online platform for tyre data collection was also launched. This demonstrates the organisations belief in the use of data to better manage tyres but also its belief in the future of retreading in South Africa.

The Gala evening was the highlight of the weekend. Long service and loyalty are rare in today's business environment, but Bandag

has historically been privileged to work with a strong and loyal franchise network – many Legends of the industry. Long Service Awards that were handed out this year included:

Bandag Manufacturing Franchise 5 Years

- PROBANDAG

BTS Franchise 10 Years

- BTS BARKLY WEST
- BTS QUEENSTOWN

Bandag Manufacturing Franchise 10 Years

- EAST LONDON BANDAG
- PROTEA TYRES KIMBERLEY

BTS Franchise 15 Years

- BTS KLERKSDORP
- BTS RUIMSIG
- BTS WORCESTER



R-Drive 001+

R-Trailer 002

BTS Franchise 20 Years

- **BTS CAPE TOWN**

Bandag Manufacturing Franchise 20 Years

- **MEGA TREADS**
- **THOMAS TYRES LOWVELD**

Bandag Manufacturing Franchise 25 Years

- **LONGLIFE TYRES**

Bandag Manufacturing Franchise 30 Years

- **AFRITREAD LUSAKA**

The awards evening was also used to reveal Bandag's Quest for Gold (QFG) Winners. QFG is Bandag's way of rewarding franchisees that excel in delivering the Bandag Package of Value (POV).

The efforts and achievements of franchisees don't go unnoticed and is encouraged to ensure fleet operators get the best products and services that Bandag has on offer! The categories on which franchisees were measured were very focused on Bandag's POV.

This year's winners were:

Bandag Rubber Sales Excellence:

- **TONWAY TYRES**

PSI Excellence:

- **LIMPOPO TYRES**

On-Site Service Excellence:

- **LONGLIFE TYRES**

BTS Excellence:

- **BTS CAPE TOWN**

BANDAG Manufacturing Excellence:

- **MEGA TREADS**

This year Bandag awarded two Director's Award. **New Roadgrip Retreaders** and **Thomas Tyres Meyerton** were recognised for not only their loyalty to Bandag but also the achievements that both businesses have managed over many sustained years – making them Legends of the industry.

Bandag rewards franchisees that excel in delivering quality, innovation, reliability and information, which are all paramount to ensuring the competitiveness of Bandag end-users. The



Passionate, Multi Generational Bandag retreaders - The Janse van Rensburg family.



Bandag CEO - John Laskarides.



Bandag Quest for Gold winners.



Gala evening marquees.



The Bandag conference presenters.

success of end-users determines the success of Bandag and its franchise network!

This year sees our top Bandag/BTS franchisees heading off to Vietnam – a country

with a rich cultural heritage, stunning natural beauty and warm hospitality. Congratulations to the winners as they jet off on a golden adventure.



Double Triumph: Royal Tyres Clinches Top Standard Bank KZN Business Award and Top Brand Runner-Up

Eighty-Five Years of Excellence Underpinning a Double Win at KZN's Premier Business Ceremony

Durban, KZN – Following on its remarkable achievements from last year, Royal Tyres has again cemented its position as a powerhouse in the provincial business landscape, clinching the Top Award in the General Business Section of the Standard Bank KZN Business Awards in 2025. Adding to this significant recognition, the company also proudly secured second place in the highly coveted KZN Top Brand Award.

This successful family business, which boasts a rich 85-year heritage, continues to demonstrate that longevity and tradition are perfectly compatible with modern business excellence. The judges selected Royal Tyres for the prestigious General Business award based on its unwavering demonstration of excellence across critical operational pillars. Specifically, the company was lauded for its exemplary performance in governance, ethics, financial reporting, stakeholder engagement, and innovation.

A spokesperson for the awards committee noted, "Royal Tyres exemplifies the stability and forward-thinking required for sustainable success in the KZN economy. Their dedication to ethical practice and community engagement, coupled with sound financial stewardship, made them the clear choice for the General Business section's highest honour."

Beyond the scrutiny of the judging panel, Royal Tyres also proved its connection with the public. "The Top Brand Accolade" is unique in that it is awarded solely by public vote and is contested over several weeks through a rigorous online voting process. Placing second in this category is a powerful testament to the consumer trust and brand loyalty the family-run business has cultivated

over eight and a half decades. It signals that while Royal Tyres operates with the discipline of a corporate leader, it maintains the public affection of a cherished local institution.

The dual victory highlights a company that is not just meeting but exceeding expectations, balancing internal operational strength with external brand recognition and public confidence. For Royal Tyres, 2025 is already shaping up to be a year defined by historic achievement and a clear path toward continued dominance.

Royal Tyres exemplifies the stability and forward-thinking required for sustainable success in the KZN economy.



A VIEW FROM THE FITMENT CENTRE FLOOR:

On the Brink of an AGOA Cliff Edge

Written By: Dylan Petzer (National Vice-Chairman for Tyre Equipment Parts Association (TEPA), a constituent association of the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI))

As I write this, the afternoon sun is casting long shadows across our workshops and warehouses. But for our industry, a much larger shadow looms. It is September 30th. In just a few hours, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a piece of legislation that has defined our trade relationship with the United States for a quarter of a century, is set to expire. The fate of an entire economic ecosystem now hinges on a last-minute political decision approximately 13,000 km away.

We are, of course, aware that the Trump administration has voiced its support for a one-year extension. While this signal from the White House provides a sliver of hope, it is not yet a guarantee. As of this moment, that support has not been formally legislated by the US Congress. So we wait. Every single member of the Tyre, Equipment, Parts Association (TEPA) – from the largest distributor to the smallest family-run fitment centre – is in a state of profound uncertainty. The tension is immense.

Our public stance on this has been unwavering because the facts are stark: the potential loss of AGOA is more than just an inconvenience – it is a direct threat to South African manufacturers and exporters wishing to compete equitably

in the international market. This is not a distant threat; its effects are already being felt. The damage caused by the pre-existing bilateral tariffs and the prolonged uncertainty has been catastrophic. We saw our automotive exports to the US plummet by 73% in the first quarter of 2025, a freefall that accelerated to an 85% decline in May (Engineering News, 2025).

Let's be clear about what these numbers represent in real terms. This isn't just a line on a graph; it's the potential evaporation of a significant portion of the \$18.37 million in tyres we exported to the US in 2024 alone (Trading Economics, 2025). It's the risk to the \$62 million worth of locally-made automotive parts and accessories that found a market in America in 2022 specifically because of AGOA's duty-free benefits (IOL, 2025). If AGOA lapses, these products will immediately face tariffs of up to 25% (or more depending on the politics of Washington), effectively pricing them out of the market overnight.

This financial cliff edge leads directly to the human cost, which is my greatest concern. The closure of Goodyear's 78-year-old plant in Kariega was a tragedy that stripped 907 workers of their livelihoods (IndustriALL Global Union, 2025). That event happened within a volatile trade environment; imagine the domino effect of

a full AGOA collapse. We are talking about an industry that directly employs 112,000 South Africans, with a staggering 500,000 additional jobs dependent on the wider supply chain (Bizcommunity, 2025). These are the technicians, the factory workers, the logistics staff, and the administrative personnel whose futures are now in question. This is happening in a country where the national unemployment rate already sits at a crushing 33.2% (TASEZ, 2025). The National Association of Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers (NAACAM) has already recorded 12 Original Equipment manufacturing company closures in the last two years, affecting at least 4,000 individuals (TASEZ, 2025). A lapse in AGOA would pour fuel on this fire.

In this moment of crisis, our response must be guided by a clear strategy. As we have consistently maintained, "This industry has faced tough roads before. The key to survival? Strategic agility, relentless advocacy, and a solid partnership between government and industry" (Autoforum, 2025).

In the face of this crisis, our national response must be defined by clear, decisive action. This is what South Africa is doing, and must continue to do with even greater urgency:

Accelerate Strategic Agility:

As a nation, we cannot afford to be passive. South Africa's existing export diversification is a significant strength; our automotive products already reach 155 countries, and our trade with the European Union, valued at a robust R156.7 billion, remains a critical economic pillar (NAAMSA, 2024). The current crisis must serve as a catalyst to deepen these relationships. Furthermore, we must aggressively accelerate the national pivot towards new opportunities. This means urgently unlocking the immense potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), transforming it from a policy document into a dynamic, integrated market for our components and vehicles. It also means fast-tracking our transition to producing technologies for electric vehicles and green manufacturing, ensuring our industry remains relevant and competitive on the global stage, regardless of the outcome in Washington.

Maintain a Unified Front of Relentless Advocacy:

The ongoing engagement in Washington is correctly being led by our government, and we in the industry are providing our full support wherever possible. This "Team South Africa" approach is our greatest asset. Industry partners like NAAMSA, and NAACAM are arming the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition with the vital, on-the-ground data they need to make the strongest possible case to their US counterparts. This advocacy must continue to highlight not just the trade figures, but the real-world impact that a lapse in AGOA would have on hundreds of thousands of jobs and communities.

Strengthen a Practical Public-Private Partnership: Now more than ever, the partnership between industry and government must be pragmatic and action-oriented. We are fully aligned with the DTIC in this final hour and support their proposals for duty-free quotas should the extension pass (Reuters, 2025). However, a true partnership must also focus on strengthening our domestic competitiveness. While domestic programmes like the Automotive Investment Scheme (AIS) are crucial for encouraging investment, their effectiveness is fundamentally undermined if our ports are inefficient or our energy supply is unstable and unaffordable. Therefore, our collective focus must be on urgently resolving these



TEPA

Proud Association of 

operational hurdles. A solid partnership means ensuring that a proudly South African product can be manufactured efficiently and get to market reliably, making us a competitive force globally, with or without preferential access.

In the coming days, the future of a cornerstone of South Africa's manufacturing base will be decided. We can only hope

that the bipartisan political support for a renewal translates into immediate action. A one-year extension, should it be granted, will not solve the long-term issue, but it will pull thousands of our members back from the brink. It will give us the vital breathing room needed to continue this fight for a stable and predictable trade future. The stakes could not be higher.

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DUNLOP TYRES EXTENDS DUNLOP SURE TYRE INSURANCE TO 18 MONTHS

Dunlop Tyres South Africa is raising the bar for driver confidence – extending its Dunlop Sure Tyre Insurance to 18 months of protection on tyres.

For a limited time, customers purchasing Dunlop tyres at Dunlop-branded stores between 1 October 2025 and 31 January 2026 will enjoy 18 months of cover – an upgrade from the previous 12-month offer.

The Dunlop Sure Tyre Insurance provides peace of mind by protecting customers against irreparable tyre damage where, for the first 12 months, damaged tyres are replaced in full – meaning the driver pays no cost for the replacement tyre.

In South Africa, Dunlop is the only tyre manufacturer to offer full tyre replacement.

For the remainder of the 6 months, customers will receive a credit amount towards a new tyre based on the remaining tread – ensuring extra value and ongoing protection.

“We all know how incredibly frustrating it can be when you are



driving and unintentionally hit a pothole, or incur other road damage, that leaves your tyres damaged beyond repair. It's not a cost you want to be saddled with.

To demonstrate the confidence in our product, we are giving drivers additional confidence and peace of mind. We've expanded the tyre cover to incorporate an additional six months of protection against damage based on tread wear,” said Lubin Ozoux, CEO of Dunlop Tyres South Africa.

“By extending Dunlop Sure, we're

reaffirming our commitment to protecting South African drivers and ensuring they enjoy both safety and value long after their purchase.”

The cover is activated when drivers register their purchase on the Dunlop website. Customers can take advantage of the extended Dunlop Sure Tyre Insurance by visiting participating Dunlop Zone outlets nationwide between 1 October 2025 and 31 January 2026.

SUPA QUICK EXPANDS TO OVER 200 LOCATIONS, WELCOMES NEW FITMENT CENTRE AT SOUTHGATE MALL

Supa Quick, last week, announced the official opening of its new fitment centre at Southgate Mall.

The 350m² facility, located at Shop No. 148 in Southgate Shopping Centre, features 5 modern service bays and offers a comprehensive range of automotive solutions for both passenger and commercial vehicles.

The new branch extends Supa Quick's trusted expertise to Mondeor and surrounding areas in the south of Johannesburg, where the demand for quality automotive services continues to grow. Conveniently located, the centre ensures greater accessibility and faster, more responsive service for customers.

Speaking at the launch, Neil Visser of Supa Quick described the Southgate branch as a step towards stronger community engagement. "We remain dedicated to our three core values-Service Excellence, Convenience, and Expertise-while continuing to serve the community with the highest quality. These principles are the foundation of everything we do," he said.

He added: "This investment places us within a vibrant residential and business hub, enabling us to provide reliable auto repair services while supporting the local economy. Our presence in Southgate will help create job opportunities for residents, stimulate economic activity, and deliver long-term value to the community."



Services at the Southgate Fitment Centre include:

- Tyres (Passenger, SUV,4x4, light truck and truck)
- Shocks, brakes, and batteries
- Mag repairs
- Accessories
- General servicing and vehicle safety checks

As part of the launch celebration, customers enjoyed free shock and battery tests, complimentary vehicle safety inspections, live music, and prize giveaways.

Driving Impact Beyond the Workshop

Supa Quick's vision extends beyond vehicle maintenance – it is about empowering

communities, building long-term relationships, and contributing to local economic upliftment. With South Africa's unemployment rate at 32.9% in Q1 2025 (Source: Stats SA), the opening of the Southgate branch comes at a critical time.

"The Supa Quick in Southgate will contribute to job creation for locals, helping to stimulate economic growth and development," said Visser. "Overall, the new Supa Quick branch is a valuable addition to the community, offering essential services, generating employment, and supporting long-term economic progress."



TEPA HIGHLIGHTS AFTERMARKET OPPORTUNITIES AT BRAZIL AUTO PARTS TRADE MISSION

Johann van de Merwe, Chairman of the Tyre, Equipment, Parts Association (TEPA), a proud association of the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI), recently addressed a technical seminar at the Brazil Auto Parts Trade Mission, where he shared valuable insights into the South African automotive aftermarket and the opportunities it presents for international suppliers.

Van de Merwe outlined the economic importance of the sector, which contributes 5.2% to South Africa's GDP and generates significant employment. With a vehicle parc of over 13 million, growing at 2.5% annually, and an aftermarket valued at R104 billion per year, the sector is both robust and full of growth potential.

He noted that South Africa's diverse fleet – approximately 70% passenger vehicles and 30% commercial vehicles, with an average age of around 10 years – creates sustained demand for replacement parts, tyres, and accessories. "The profile of the parc, combined with the complexity brought about by high levels of imports, provides ongoing opportunities for component suppliers across a wide range of product categories," Van de Merwe explained.

Among the most dynamic segments are replacement parts, tyres, and vehicle accessories. He said demand is being driven not only by aging vehicles and frequent maintenance needs, but



also by increased consumer interest in customisation and off-road solutions.

Van de Merwe also pointed to South Africa's regulatory shift with the implementation of the Competition Commission guidelines. These empower consumers to use independent workshops without voiding warranties and open the door for non-OEM suppliers to compete more effectively. "The Guidelines are a game changer, levelling the playing field, increasing competition, and broadening opportunities for both local and international partners to access the market," he said.

Van de Merwe said local manufacturers who historically have relied more heavily on the OE segment, now equally have an opportunity to work more collaboratively with the robust aftermarket, particularly on

the back of the risks highlighted with the revised AGOA terms for SAs manufacturing and automotive sector.

"On the import side there is clear potential for Brazilian manufacturers in supplying engine parts, brakes, suspension, and electrical components, as well as in niche areas such as performance upgrades, infotainment, and off-road products. He also highlighted the increasing importance of e-commerce in reaching consumers directly and building brand presence.

"The South African aftermarket is ripe for growth and international collaboration. Brazilian companies, with their strong manufacturing base and competitive offerings, are well-positioned to enter and thrive in this dynamic market," he concludes.

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CONTINENTAL FOCUSING ON ROLLING RESISTANCE AND REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

Minimising rolling resistance has become one of the most important goals in the field of tyre development. A primary goal for tyre and vehicle manufacturers is to reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions in vehicles equipped with internal combustion engines, and to extend the driving range in hybrid and electric vehicles by reducing energy consumption. One of the biggest contributors to rolling resistance is the energy loss generated in the form of heat, which is called hysteresis. This is the result of the tread and sidewall of the tyre flexing and bending under the vehicle's weight.

The degree of deformation is influenced by the tyre pressure, wheel load, vehicle speed and road surface characteristics. This deformation causes energy to be lost – energy that the engine or electric motor has to make up for. Thus, it is the goal of developers to keep this energy loss to a minimum in order to save fuel or electric energy in the case of EVs. Tyre manufacturers use specific rubber compounds and tread designs to control hysteresis, with low-hysteresis tyres being designed to minimise deflection, which improves fuel efficiency. This means that reducing rolling resistance is primarily the job of material researchers and tyre designers.

Conflicting goals in tyre development:

While reducing rolling resistance involves minimising energy losses, it is the complete opposite when it comes to braking, as the tyre has to dissipate as much energy as possible – which is much more difficult in wet conditions compared to dry roads.

In wet weather, the process of energy dissipation works only if the rubber compound absorbs as much energy as possible during braking. These opposite scenarios – energy dissipated has to be minimised during normal driving and maximised during braking – results in conflicting goals. Accordingly, when developing new components, tyre manufacturers have to always take into account both aspects to ensure that they both remain at a high level.

Developing energy-saving tyres:

The development of concepts for “energy-



saving tyres” goes back to the energy crises of the mid to late 1970s. In 1980, working in collaboration with and with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Research and Technology, Continental started work on a fundamental study into the design and material-related variables impacting the rolling resistance of commercial vehicles.

This study yielded a whole series of possible solutions. Silica had for the first time largely replaced carbon black, which required fossil fuels in its production. The new filler stabilised the network of bonds among the individual materials used to create the rubber compound. Tyres constructed in this way adhered to the road surface more effectively despite having lower rolling resistance. Over the same period, Continental's car tyre research team developed the “cap-and-base” principle, which combines abrasion-resistant tread compounds with shock-resistant tread compounds and thus helps to reduce rolling resistance by up to 15 percent.

As soon as the fundamental study was complete, Continental launched a large-scale R&D project codenamed EOT (Energy Optimized Tire) in 1982 with the ultimate aim of developing a tyre with 25 percent less rolling resistance and a 30 percent longer service life. This project was the starting point for the development of modern fuel-saving tyres and, in 1992, led to the unveiling of the ContiEcoContact for cars and, in 2012, the Conti EcoPlus tyre line for commercial vehicles. Other technical milestones on the road to the efficiency-optimised tyre included the flat belt

concept and finite element method. In 2011, and aimed specifically at the growing market for electric and hybrid vehicles, Continental unveiled the Conti.eContact, the first tyre of its kind to be designed according to the “tall and narrow” principle.

It was slimmer than conventional tyres, but had a relatively large diameter. Since 2020, Continental has been shipping original equipment tyres that are another 20 percent more efficient than the standard class of European tyre label “A”. This innovation was supported by, among other things, the “Green Chili 2.0” rubber compound, which ensures lower energy absorption through the tyre on contact with the road – without any compromises on any of the relevant conflicting goals. Continental has expanded this philosophy across its range, with all of its sixth and seventh-generation products in the Continental tyre portfolio optimised for all drive systems – from internal combustion engines to hybrids and EVs. All new tyres launched since 2023 feature the “EV-Compatible” logo on the sidewall.

Lower rolling resistance means reduced energy consumption. From a sustainability perspective, it does not make any difference whether tyres are fitted to combustion engine or electric vehicles. Reducing energy consumption is key. This results in lower fuel consumption for combustion engine vehicles and longer range for electric vehicles and, as long as the electricity used for charging does not originate solely from renewables, lower overall emissions for both drive types.

MATHE GROUP EXTRACTS CLEAN STEEL FROM TYRES FOR EXPORT

Radial truck tyre recycler, Mathe Group, has commissioned a multi-million-rand investment in new equipment to extract hundreds of tons of “clean steel” for export to India & South Korea.

Mathe Group CEO, Dr Mehran Zarrebini, says that the clean steel investment, which includes the installation of a new clean steel mill with an automated packaging line and several de-beading machines will boost earnings.

Up until now, steel – which comprises 30% of each radial truck tyre – has been an unavoidable by product that had to be removed before tyres could be reduced to rubber crumb for re-use. This will now become a valued second income stream, ultimately growing export earnings and creating more jobs.

A world class upgrade

Radial truck tyres are processed by removing the walls which are supported by a steel ring (known as debeading) before being fed through a shredder which downsizes the tyre so that additional steel can be extracted and the remaining rubber turned into rubber crumb.

According to Dr Zarrebini, when tyre recycling started in South Africa, the side walls of the tyres were cut off and sold for use in agriculture.

In 2017, when Mathe Group moved to Hammarsdale, the current de-beading process, which uses a hook to remove the steel ring on the sides of the tyres, was introduced.

However, this damages the geometry of the beads, making them difficult to bend, package and sell.

The new machinery – amongst the first used worldwide – removes the entire bead free of rubber and keeps the bead intact. This steel material is then utilised in blasting applications as a substitute for virgin steel.



Dr Zarrebini says that the price gleaned from this material is three times higher than that paid for scrap metal – with the added bonus of additional rubber removed boosting the amount of rubber recovered from each tyre.

The first two de-beaders are already operational with a third en route.

The new debeading machines will replace existing equipment, which is oil driven and costly to maintain, reducing both emissions and operating costs.

“We are looking at material that could be potentially used in the local steel market which is under huge pressure. Right now, no steel extracted from tyres is sold locally,” he explains.

Milling cleaner steel from tyres

At present, the steel extracted from the remainder of the tyres is sent to India where it is cleaned before being shipped to South Korea for use in the manufacture of goods such as ships or motor cars. The cleaning process will now take place in house.

Mathe Group, which processed its millionth radial truck tyre last year and has gone on to increase capacity substantially during 2025 has long been recognised as a sustainability

success story and an example of what can be achieved through South Africa’s national tyre recycling strategy which is in the process of revision.

Dr Zarrebini says that the installation of a steel cleaning mill, which will reduce the rubber contamination from the current 10% to less than 2%, is part of a broader re-design of the production process and will include an in built packaging line which will bag the steel and deposit it into awaiting shipping container which is then trucked to the Durban port.

Again, because this steel is clean and does not need to be reprocessed, it commands double the price on the international market. Increased capacity at the plant will see 108 tons (or a minimum of four containers) leaving Hammarsdale each week.

“The new steel processing system cuts a lot of cost from the system and adds both efficiency and a further 8% of rubber crumb to the process. Although steel wasn’t initially Mathe’s main income stream, with the escalating cost and complexity of doing business, it has become an important part of the business.”

The steel extraction equipment will be fully operational by January 2026.



By John Stone

For the past two decades Sapphire Media has supported the worldwide tyre and automotive industry as a unique Business Media Consultant delivering professional editorial and marketing/PR services to a global client base and as a regular columnist in leading publications.

DUNLOP NAMED OFFICIAL TYRE PARTNER OF “GRAN TURISMO™ 7”

Dunlop has joined forces with the legendary driving simulator “Gran Turismo” franchise, announcing its role as the official tyre partner of “Gran Turismo 7” for PlayStation®4 and PlayStation®5, and the “Gran Turismo World Series”.

“Gran Turismo” is one of the world’s most popular racing simulation video game series – thrilling more than 90 million PlayStation® players since its launch in 1997 and setting the gold standard for racing games with realistic, cutting-edge graphics, and near-authentic driving experiences.

This announcement comes amid significant global developments. Sumitomo Rubber Industries (SRI), parent company of Dunlop Tyres South Africa, acquired the DUNLOP global rights, enabling SRI to operate the Dunlop tyre business globally and strengthen the brand’s presence worldwide.

“We are very excited to welcome Dunlop to the Gran Turismo family. As a company with a significant legacy in automotive and motorsport history, Dunlop continues to demonstrate innovation and competitiveness in the industry. We look forward to a productive collaboration to engage a new generation of enthusiasts with racing and Dunlop tyres through the Gran Turismo World Series and franchise,” said Kazunori Yamauchi, Gran Turismo Series Producer.



As part of the partnership, Dunlop will serve as the official tyre supplier from Round Two of the 2025 “Gran Turismo World Series” championship in Berlin.

In a future game update for “Gran Turismo 7”, the Dunlop brand will appear in various forms:

- Dunlop will be added to the “Brand Central” museum, showcasing over 130 years of Dunlop history, including a variety of products developed with proprietary technologies and motorsport activities.
- The Dunlop logo will appear on trackside branding on circuits in the game.
- In the “Tuning Shop,” which offers parts to

enhance vehicle performance, players will be able to select Dunlop tyres.

Additionally, a Dunlop-themed time trial in-game event is planned.

Lubin Ozoux, CEO of Dunlop Tyres SA, said: “We are thrilled at the Dunlop brand developments at our parent group level. Dunlop’s history and DNA is woven into racing. This partnership brings that same spirit of performance and innovation to the virtual racetrack, inspiring the next generation of drivers and motorsport enthusiasts. Seeing our tyres in action virtually is just the next step in engaging with our audience.”

GOODYEAR EAGLE F1 SHINES IN AUTOBILD 2025 SUMMER PERFORMANCE TYRE TEST



Following on from the 52 set braking shootout, the full Autobild summer tyre test has taken the best twenty tyres to the full set of testing, with some interesting highlights!

There are two interesting stories. Firstly, is the rise of the Chinese tyres, with both Linglong and Sailun performing really well in the grip tests. Does this mean Chinese tyres are now fighting with the premium manufacturers? Well, sort of.

In terms of grip, both the Chinese tyres performed extremely well, performing above average in both the braking tests. However, it is quite clear they have traded grip for tread life, as both the Chinese brands finished at the bottom of the wear test.

This means, despite their cheaper purchase price, their total cost of ownership, measured in euros per 1000km driven, was around double the test winning Goodyear. Yes, the Chinese companies can now make a tyre that grips really well, but no, they can't yet seem to make one that also lasts.

The second story is regarding the Pirelli P Zero PZ4 AO. It was mentioned in the shootout, the Pirelli was the Audi specific version of the PZ4, which is unusual as OE tyres are quite different from the aftermarket version. In this case it seems Audi focused on dry grip as the PZ4 under delivered in the wet.

The final surprise is the Bridgestone Potenza Sport performing very well in the wear test, which is unusual for the Japanese tyre. They did still note in the full article that the tyre had its usual very high wear on track.

Dry

Bridgestone Potenza Sport achieved the shortest braking distance of 32.6 meters, followed closely by Falken ZEAX ZE320 and Michelin Pilot Sport 5, while the budget Autogreen tyre trailed by nearly 6 meters.

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NEW FORMAT FOR THE GLOBAL OTR CONFERENCE TO DEBUT AT THE TIRE COLOGNE 2026

Strong signal for internationality, innovation and sustainability in the tyre industry.

THE TIRE COLOGNE (TTC) continues to grow: in 2026, the leading international trade fair for tyres and wheels will host a new format of The Global OTR Conference, the industry event for the off-the-road tyre industry (OTR), for the first time. By focusing on the OTR segment, which is becoming increasingly important worldwide, TTC is creating new synergies.

Designed as an innovative and interactive format of The Global OTR Conference, the focus here is on innovation, knowledge exchange, sustainable life cycle management and networking. This makes the trade fair a place where expertise meets vision. The individual sessions, which will be held on the TIRE Stage, will highlight the topics that will shape the future of the industry: innovation, resource efficiency, safety and sustainability.

'The fact that this format of the Global OTR Conference will take place at THE TIRE COLOGNE in the future is a strong signal of the international relevance of our trade fair,' says Ingo Riedeberger, Director of THE TIRE COLOGNE. 'The conference creates a stage on which we can shape the future of the tyre industry together – with a passion for innovation and a commitment to sustainability. This also applies to the important off-the-road segment.'



Koen Vandermeersch, Managing Director of 102psi, also emphasises its importance: 'The Global OTR Conference sees itself as a platform that takes an in-depth look at current and future challenges facing the industry. The cooperation with THE TIRE COLOGNE offers a unique opportunity to raise the profile of this important segment in a very international environment.'

The message is clear: THE TIRE COLOGNE is more than just a trade fair. It is the meeting place for the global tyre community. With the integration of The Global OTR

Conference, it shows how an industry can share knowledge, drive innovation and develop sustainable strategies for the future.



PIRELLI P ZERO E WINS ADI INTERNATIONAL COMPASSO D'ORO AWARD

Pirelli said its P Zero E was made using more than 55% bio-based and recycled materials.

The Pirelli P Zero E has won the ADI International Compasso d'Oro Award, becoming the first tire to earn recognition in the Design for Mobility category. The award was presented during the 70th anniversary celebration of the Compasso d'Oro Awards at Expo 2025 in Osaka, Japan.

This year's Compasso d'Oro Award reflected the Expo theme, "Designing Future Society for Our Lives." Pirelli received recognition in the "Connecting Lives" category. The Pirelli P Zero E tire integrates a high percentage of natural and recycled materials in the high-performance segment, it said.

Pirelli P Zero E Performance and Efficiency

Pirelli said it built its P Zero E with more than 55% bio-based and recycled materials. It earned a triple "Class A" score on the European tire label for wet grip, rolling resistance, and noise. Designed for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles, it increases mileage by up to 10% with Elect technology, Pirelli said. RunForward technology also enables continued driving after a puncture.



The tire leads the company's technology portfolio alongside Cyber Tyre, which uses sensors to gather and process data.

Recognition and Future Development

"This recognition celebrates Pirelli's design excellence and the innovative scope of products like P Zero E, confirming the role of research and development as a driver of progress and sustainability," said

Piero Misani, Pirelli's Executive Vice President and Chief Technical Officer. "Our commitment in the field of R&D has made Pirelli a benchmark in the global industry for future tire development. That's thanks to the use of new materials with reduced environmental impact. Not to mention the increasingly widespread use of advanced artificial intelligence throughout every phase."

POINT S INTERNATIONAL LAUNCHES NEXT GENERATION CAMPUS FOR FUTURE LEADERS

Point S said the program is meant for young leaders to navigate workforce shortages, customer expectations, and technological change.

Point S International launched the Next Generation Campus from Sept. 1 to 5 in Provence, France. The inaugural event brought together 80 young leaders from 10 European countries, all representing family-owned, independent tire and parts businesses within the Point S network.

The four-day program tackled the biggest challenges facing the automotive industry. Point S said the program is meant for young leaders to navigate workforce shortages, customer expectations, and technological change. The campus offered management training and personal development to help participants establish authority within their family businesses.

Attendees fell into three groups: students preparing to join their family companies, current employees getting ready for leadership roles, and new leaders already managing operations. The curriculum provided tools that previous generations of leaders may not have had during their tenure.

Point S Next Generation Campus

A central theme of the Point S Next Generation Campus was the future of automotive technology. Expert speakers from major car manufacturers addressed how workshops must adapt to electrification,



new diagnostic equipment, and changing consumer demands.

Innovation workshops challenged participants to reimagine store operations, customer experience, and future service offerings. The winning vision will be presented at the Point S annual conference, the company said.

Building a European Network of Young Leaders

Beyond technical and management training, the programme emphasised community. Sports, social events, and networking opportunities helped participants form an alumni network of

Europe's next generation of automotive leaders, Point S said.

"The automotive industry is facing its biggest transformation in history, and traditional business knowledge alone won't prepare the next generation for what's ahead," said Fabien Bouquet, Point S International CEO. "Parents can teach their children how to run today's business. But they can't prepare them for challenges that didn't exist during their own leadership journey. This campus bridges that gap. It brings together young leaders from across Europe to learn, innovate, and build the networks they'll need to lead our industry through the next decade of change."

Generation 
From legacy to leadership

MORE SUSTAINABLE TYRES: CONTINENTAL USES SYNTHETIC RUBBER MADE FROM USED COOKING OIL

Continental is prioritising the use of renewable and recycled materials in its tyre production. While the share of these materials averaged 26 percent in 2024, the tyre manufacturer expects an increase of 2 to 3 percentage points by the end of this year. In just five years, by 2030, this figure is expected to rise to at least 40 percent. Among other materials, the focus is on rubber and resins from various more sustainable sources. Both materials are essential for the quality and performance characteristics of tyres.



The actual type of rubber used in a particular tyre depends heavily on the component in question and the function it performs. Continental car tyres are composed of up to 100 different raw materials, which in turn are used to produce up to 20 different customised rubber compounds per article, among other things. These also contain more and more recycled variants of additives and supplementary raw materials, as well as circular resins that make the resulting rubber more pliable and improve overall tyre performance.

"We're closing the loop: Continental is ramping up its commitment to a circular economy and mapping out its path for the future," says Jorge Almeida, head of Sustainability at Continental Tires. "Innovative solutions enable us to use more sustainable raw materials, such as synthetic rubber made from used cooking oil or resins based on certified renewable feedstocks originally derived from vegetable oil."

Synthetic rubber from recycled cooking oil

Rubber is a vital commodity for global mobility. The components that make up a tyre consist of various types of rubber spanning a range of applications. Continental mainly uses two categories of rubber, each offering specific technological benefits for specific tyre components: natural rubber and synthetically produced rubber. Natural rubber – the type traditionally used in tyre production – is used, for example, in the treads of car and truck tyres, where the rubber needs to be extremely hard-wearing. Its special properties include its impact resistance and durability, thanks to the strain-induced crystallization inherent in naturally grown rubber. This unique feature of natural rubber cannot yet be reproduced artificially.

Synthetic rubber, is incorporated into the tread of car tyres in addition to natural rubber because of its superior braking performance

and rolling resistance. The tyre manufacturer is increasingly using synthetic rubber derived from more sustainable sources, such as for example pyrolysis oil made from end-of-life tyres or used cooking oil. It sources the raw materials for this more sustainable synthetic rubber from suppliers such as Synthos and TotalEnergies Cray Valley, both of which are using a mass balance approach valorizing sustainable sources certified by the ISCC PLUS International Sustainability and Carbon Certification.

Circular resins for more sustainable use of materials in tyre production

Continental takes a holistic approach to its tyre development. This includes ensuring that all raw materials are sourced from more sustainable sources step by step. Resins play a crucial role in unlocking rubber compounds' optimum performance – for example, by improving their wet grip, abrasion resistance and rolling resistance – which in turn reduces the vehicle's energy consumption. Continental already uses circular resins produced by suppliers like TotalEnergies Cray Valley that are ISCC PLUS-certified, sustaining along the value chain the development of renewables feedstocks originally coming from vegetable oil or used cooking oil.

Use of more sustainable additives

Alongside resins, certain additives also constitute an indispensable part of the tyre production process at Continental. These are used, for example, to protect rubber during vulcanisation against the side-effects of heat or oxygen. Continental is the first tyre manufacturer using the ISCC PLUS-certified rubber additive TMQ from LANXESS, while

adhering to the same high quality and performance specifications. According to life cycle assessments, this additive, which is produced from raw materials such as biocircular acetone, has a carbon footprint that is more than 30 percent lower than its conventionally manufactured counterpart. Biocircular acetone is made from waste of biological origin, like recycled cooking oil.

Traceability of mass balance-certified materials

The use of such sustainable materials is made possible, among other things, by the mass balance approach, which Continental systematically uses to advance its goal of using at least 40 percent renewable and recycled raw materials in tyre production.

The approach involves mixing fossil, renewable and recycled materials during the manufacturing process and tracking them as they move along the value chain. This allows the company to attribute the input of renewable and recycled raw materials to the output of the final product and thus precisely document – and successively increase – the use of ISCC PLUS certified materials.

"The mass balance approach enables us to efficiently manage the complexity of the raw materials portfolio and track how these raw materials are used at multiple production sites in a wide range of markets," explains Matthias Haufe, head of Material Development and Industrialization at Continental Tires. "In this way, we can steadily increase the share of renewable and recycled materials in our tyre production – and transparently document the progress we make."

APOLLO TYRES ANNOUNCED AS LEAD SPONSOR OF TEAM INDIA IN HISTORIC 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH BCCI

In a landmark announcement Apollo Tyres has been named as the Lead Sponsor of the Indian Cricket Team under a prestigious 3-year strategic partnership with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

Cricket isn't just a sport in India — it's the nation's heartbeat. It unites every city, street and home. As Team India takes the field, brand Apollo Tyres will stand with them — on their jerseys, in their triumphs and in the dreams they ignite. As millions watch the Indian team, Apollo Tyres will also Go The Distance with them — celebrating every six, every wicket and every roar in the stadium.

This agreement grants Apollo Tyres the Title Sponsor Rights for all Bilateral and ICC (both men's and women's teams) home and away matches. As part of this landmark collaboration, the Apollo Tyres logo will be prominently featured on the front and leading arm of the official Team India jersey, symbolising a powerful alliance between one of the world's most beloved sports and a brand ready to go the distance for the national pride.

Neeraj Kanwar, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Apollo Tyres Ltd said, "Cricket's unmatched popularity in India and worldwide makes it an honour for us to



become the 'National Team Lead Sponsor' of Team India. This partnership is about national pride, strengthening consumer trust and showcasing Apollo as a true leader in our category, while supporting Indian sports at the highest level and creating unforgettable moments for fans worldwide."

Devajit Saikia, Honorary Secretary, BCCI, said: "The arrival of Apollo Tyres as our new sponsor is a testament to the hard work and consistent performance of our teams. We are excited about this being Apollo's first major sponsorship in India cricket, which speaks volumes about the sport's unparalleled reach and influence. This is

more than a commercial agreement; it's a partnership between two institutions that have earned the trust and respect of millions."

This collaboration marks a significant milestone for both, brand Apollo Tyres and Indian cricket, promising impactful fan engagement, innovative activations and a celebration of Indian cricket's legacy and future. The partnership officially kicks off with immediate effect.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is the governing body for cricket in India. It organises domestic and international matches, and works to grow and promote the sport at all levels.

INSIDE YOKOHAMA'S STRATEGY THAT DROVE SALES PAST ¥1 TRILLION

In fiscal 2024, Yokohama produced one of the company's biggest milestones to date. For the first time, the company posted sales revenue above ¥1 trillion (approx. \$6.7 billion) and business profit above ¥100 billion (approx. \$667 million). That marked the third consecutive year of record results, and after reviewing the company's 2025 integrated report, it's clear that this achievement is largely due to the latest Yokohama tyre strategy.

Let's dig into what's behind the Japanese company's latest success story.

How the Yokohama Tyre Strategy Balanced the Portfolio

Just a decade ago, Yokohama's sales leaned heavily toward consumer tyres. In 2016, the company's consumer-to-commercial tyre ratio stood at 4:1.

"We have corrected this distortion through M&A, starting with our acquisition of ATG in 2016, TWS in 2023, and finally Goodyear's OTR business in February 2025," Yokohama Chairman and CEO Masataka Yamaishi said in the report. "As a result, our consumer tire to commercial tyre sales ratio is now in line with the overall market's 1:1 ratio."

This change reflects a major tyre manufacturer reshaping its portfolio. The report emphasises that balancing passenger and commercial segments reduces risk, since downturns in one area may be offset by stability in agriculture, mining, or truck/bus.



Off-Highway Tires: A Core Pillar of the Yokohama Tyre Strategy

According to the report, Yokohama views off-highway tyres (OHT) as a central growth driver. Passenger and truck/bus tyre segments remain crowded, but in comparison, OHT offers higher barriers to entry.

"Our acquisitions of ATG and TWS have given us the top share in the market for agricultural machinery tyres, and our TRELLEBORG, Mitas, ALLIANCE and GALAXY brands have products in all price ranges," the report states. "By optimising production for each brand and adjusting the product mix to match demand during different economic conditions, we have been able to maximise profits and our market share."

The February 2025 acquisition of Goodyear's OTR business corrected a product imbalance, Yokohama states in the report. Yokohama's OTR business leaned toward construction, while Goodyear's leaned toward mining. Together, the lineup

now reflects the global 6:4 mining-to-construction ratio.

"We have secured the No. 3 position in the global mining and construction tyre market. We will use this acquisition to establish an even stronger global presence," the company noted.

Consumer Tyre Growth as Part of the Yokohama Tyre Strategy

In consumer tyres, Yokohama says it is pursuing both premium growth and cost competitiveness.

"Our response has been to adopt a strategy to enhance profitability by exploiting our existing strengths in the passenger car tyre market, and raise the sales ratio of our higher-value-added ADVAN, GEOLANDAR, and winter tyres (AGW) from 40% to 50% within the Yokohama brand, which accounts for 99% of our passenger car tyre sales," Yamaishi said.

GOODYEAR FORMS GLOBAL RACING ORGANISATION



The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company announced the creation of Global Racing, a new organisation that unifies all motorsport operations under one global structure. Goodyear said the milestone begins a new chapter in its racing legacy.

Xavier Fraipont will serve as vice president of Goodyear Global Racing. He will guide strategic direction while aligning the group with Goodyear's broader brand and product vision. With nearly 30 years of experience in racing and product development, Goodyear said Fraipont has the expertise to evolve its motorsport strategy.

Fraipont will report jointly to Chris Hesel, senior vice president and chief technical

officer, and Will Roland, senior vice president and chief marketing officer.

"Goodyear has been synonymous with car racing since the very beginning of our history," said Hesel. "We're advancing our commitment to innovation – enhancing performance and elevating our competitive edge worldwide."

Goodyear remains the exclusive tyre supplier for several of the world's racing series. At the heart of its racing legacy is the Eagle tyre, Goodyear said.

"Motorsport is a central pillar of our brand strategy," said Roland. "It's where our technology, performance and brand identity converge. Racing provides the ultimate proving ground."



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