

Southern Africa

TREADS DIGITAL

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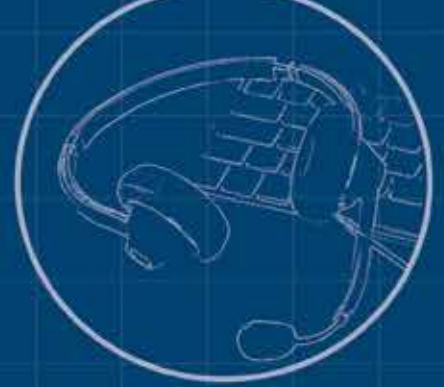
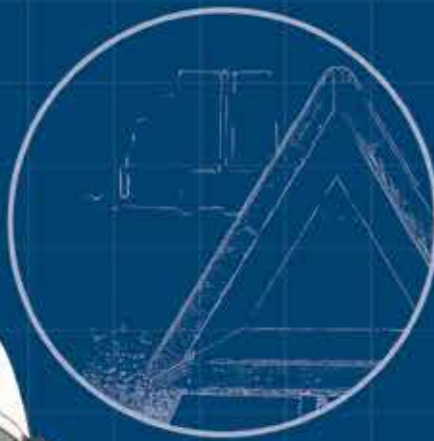
TYRE CRIME
Will your
insurance policy
cover you?



One-on-one with
Continental Tyre's Shaun Uys

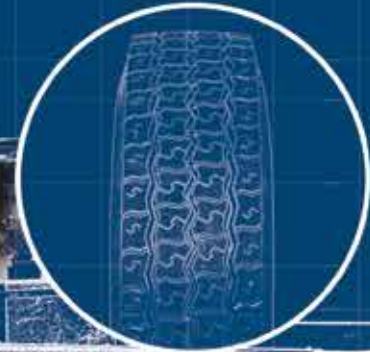
Tyre test demonstrates
dangers of inferior tyres

Waste Tyres –
an industry in limbo



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Editor's Corner

All I can say is, wow! The response, following the release of our first Digital Edition of SA TREADS (Spring 2019 edition), has been overwhelming! Thank you to all who took the time to call, message or mail us with your words of support and praise. We are humbled by all of this incredible feedback.

From this point on, SA TREADS Digital – sporting a brand-new layout and design – will be arriving in your mailboxes for viewing via your laptops or smart phones every two months, in a bid to keep you up to date with all that is happening in the industry.

Take the Waste Tyre Management debacle, for example. As 2019 draws to a close there is still no clear resolution in sight. All we know for certain is that both plans previously submitted, were outrightly rejected by Minister Barbara Dallas Greecy. The good news, based on reports we are getting from our various sources, is that the Minister is sympathetic to the industry's pressing calls to address the matter, given its gravity. The bad news is that in the interim, the industry remains in a state of limbo. For the latest developments on this contentious subject, turn to page 18

Taking the spotlight, is Continental Tyres SA with an exclusive interview with MD Shaun Uys, in which he maps out the way

forward for the company and its long-term ambitions, coupled with an important tyre test conducted by CTSA recently, to demonstrate the dangers of driving on sub-standard tyres. Turn to page 14 to find out why forking out for a premium tyre could prove lifesaving!

And following our story on the rise in tyre crime in the last issue, we now pose that all-important question, 'will your insurance pay out should you become the next victim to tyre theft and hijacking?' The answer on page 12.

All this and much more! Keep your comments coming. We love hearing from you!

Best wishes for the festive season. Drive safely.

Liana

Southern Africa
TREADS

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Continental Tyre SA sets sights on Africa and niche market segments



ONE-ON-ONE WITH MD **SHAUN UYS**

Shaun Uys, Managing Director of Continental Tyre South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa was recently selected as Africa MD of the Year for 2019 by Global 100. An annual publication with a readership of over 293 000 industry leaders in 163 countries, the magazine's annual awards programme recognises the achievements and expertise of companies and individuals operating to the highest standards across the globe.

We caught up with Shaun at CTSA's headquarters in Port Elizabeth, for an exclusive interview, to find out more about what led to his nomination and subsequent accolade, where Shaun also took the time to outline the company's vision and business strategy for the coming years.

Congratulations on this achievement Shaun. Tell us more about the process Global 100 follows to source and select its award recipients.

The magazine's annual awards programme recognises the achievements and expertise of companies and individuals operating to the highest standard across the globe. Nominees are shortlisted by means of market research, client nominations, referrals, press coverage and industry awards as a way to identify those firms and individuals demonstrating outstanding achievements. The global readership accounts for approximately 21 percent of the votes, and the firm or individual whose performance and values exhibit the closest match with Global 100's selection criteria, is eventually chosen as the winner in their category.

My staff submitted my nomination which, in truth, I had forgotten about, so it was an

unexpected surprise to hear the announcement on Radio Algoa last month that I had been selected.

What were some of the initiatives you introduced that you believe contributed towards your recognition by Global 100?

I think that one of the two leading items that contributed was the change to our route to market and the successful franchising of our previous marketing initiative, the ContiPartner programme. It did very well for Continental during its more than 20 year of existence, however times were changing and we needed to adapt and so did our ContiPartner programme.

I proposed that the ContiPartner Programme needed to evolve, to become more inclusive and it needed to occupy a greater share of our business to secure a more sustainable route to market. To do this we needed a more inclusive

approach than a simple marketing initiative and the current franchise approach we use today in BestDrive was derived. I also believed that this could then be managed into a master license agreement and rolled out into Africa with our distributors.

I think the second element that could have contributed to my award was the successful establishment of our legal entity, Continental Tyres West Africa from which we manage all activities in West Africa from our base in Ghana.

This set into motion CTSA's expansion into sub-Saharan Africa as part of Continental's long-term growth strategy, known as Vision 2025 and these elements have done very well for us. Of course you also need a little bit of luck, which also came our way. (chuckles)

In my time working in the USA, we opened our



The flagship store in Port Elizabeth houses the Conti Training Academy, Technical Centre and Conference venue

first BestDrive store in 2008 in Phoenix, Arizona, in a bid to satisfy the truck tyre fleet business. It was also owned by Continental and used to learn about how to handle truck tyre fleets. This formed the beginning of the BestDrive concept in South Africa. We launched our pilot project in South Africa in 2010 on the back of my American experience. The rationale was, 'let us buy a few tyre stores in South Africa, implement the same business model and core values as we did in the USA and if successful, franchise the concept.'

I take it that in the South African context, we are referring to the Jody's Tyre Group of companies.

Precisely. We concluded that our 'Retail Lab' – as it was being referred to internally – must be located in the same city. The thought process was that we would "learn on our money", through these eight stores, before enforcing the concept onto prospective franchisees.



Next, in 2013, we opened our flagship store here in Port Elizabeth, which has since expanded to include a Technical Customer Service centre, the Continental Training Academy and a full-fledged Conference facility.

We then went on to consolidate our operations under the ContiTrade banner, integrating Fit & Go and ContiPartner into one - pooling our resources into what became BestDrive. At the same time, we sold KwikFit to our BBEE shareholder. Initially, 90 ContiPartners made up the BestDrive concept, and by the end of 2019 we have more than 160 BestDrive stores across Southern Africa.

Has the growth of BestDrive come about by way of new stores or through switching alliances?

I think most would agree that opening a Greenfield store in the current trading climate is not economically viable. We concentrated on Brownfield stores that were already in business, in addition to gaining new stores from other brands. I am proud to say that today, BestDrive is our best performing channel, generating double-digit performances in a market that is nearly double digits down.

Talk us through your expansion drive into Africa.

With the BestDrive concept proving successful on home ground, we decided to take it beyond our borders, starting with Namibia, which is now running exceptionally well

with a large share of market, and the master franchise there has worked well.

Next came Zambia, which could not quite match the success of the Namibian operation in that it entailed obtaining a master license in order to appoint a distributor. We also opened a store in Mauritius which is running well, courtesy of the distributor we selected, who also happens to be a BMW vehicle dealer. This distributor is already familiar with working within a master franchise framework, and this appears to be the winning recipe when embarking on new ventures outside the country.

Currently, and despite the economic difficulties they are facing as a country, we are also exploring opportunities in Zimbabwe.

Four years ago, we opened Continental Tire West Africa look after the markets in this region. The operation – which is being run by 13 people based in Ghana's capital city, Accra – is showing great promise.

What sort of challenges are you encountering when conducting business outside of South Africa?

Suffice to say that running a business in Africa is a marathon, not a sprint! It takes time to learn the market. Change happens quickly. New regulations, regime changes and the like, are commonplace. Perseverance is key in this market, as is managing expectation. We have come to learn not to expect instant success.

Interestingly too, what we thought would be good for one business, has worked out better for another. For example, the passenger market in West Africa is harder to penetrate, but we are making inroads into the commercial and mining sectors, especially with the blue-chip companies operating there which require a more sophisticated offering such as cpk contracts, cost analysis and so on.

We are also finding unexpected success with our port business. West Africa relies heavily



on the shipping industry. Everything comes in by sea and this has led to a significant rise in the sale of our portal and bias ply range of tyres. Ghana is also known for its gold mining operations and we have OTR tyres coming in from our Portuguese plant as well as bias ply tyres coming in from Malaysia to service this market.

Is there still demand for bias ply tyres in the market?

Very much so, especially in Africa. Bear in mind, CTSA closed its bias production line in South Africa in order to pool its economies of scale, not because of dwindling demand. Bias is still viable and relevant, and we will continue to support this segment with products sourced from our other plants around the world.

Speaking of OTR, what led to the decision to terminate your truck tyre production in South Africa?

The old generation truck tyre building machines could not build the casing integrity to support our lifecycle approach, and to ensure that the casings are suitable for retreading, which is an

important facet of the truck business.

Also it is difficult to support a truck tyre investment in South Africa today. So it was a strategic decision to source truck tyres from our global plants that are producing the latest truck tyre products.

Our EU plants produce tyres specific for the African road conditions. Accordingly, with the lack of subsidies on truck tyres and influx of imports, it simply did not justify further investment.

We will never be the biggest player in this market. Our aim is to adopt a fleet by fleet approach towards gaining our niche of market share.

The tyre industry, and the truck business in particular, is seen as male dominated. What is CTSA doing to address this?

We have a full-fledged truck tyre team headed by a female at senior management level. This not only places us in a strong position to service our customers, but meets

our company focus to increase female diversity in our operations worldwide.

Continental has an equal opportunity approach for women and men in our business, and bringing in greater female representation at all levels is crucial as we strive to meet our diversity targets we have set ourselves.

What new developments does CTSA have lined up?

We are working on Digital Solutions which uses sensors for information such as heat build-up to monitor the tyre operating conditions. This system uses algorithms to predict what is happening during the service life of the tyre. With the information and data generated, breakdowns and service interventions can be predicted.

The data amassed will be based in a central depository to assist in providing the lowest cost solutions for fleets, thereby enabling us to offer cpk contracts to limit risk and assist in achieving the lowest overall driving costs.



When are you expected to launch this?

The project forms part of our long-term vision. It will require our OE strategy and customer strategy to be firmly in place in order to link it to our fleet approach.

With this in mind, the initiative will launch in the bigger markets first. However, the technology is already in service and we have a few fleets busy testing the concept in South Africa, with encouraging results. We aim to showcase our technology and what it can achieve, and are busy finalising our strategy to roll it out to the broader market.

Are there any initiatives in the pipeline for the short-term?

Our immediate aim is to become a specialist plant, with particular focus on the LCV and SUV markets, which are strong in Africa. The move will also provide bigger market scope and provide us with the ability to service sub-Saharan alongside other markets within the Continental framework. It will further allow us to meet the needs of the OEMs which are all focusing on increasing their market share in SUV, while the LCV sector dominates local sales.

Let's not forget, the global tyre market is suppressed. Therefore, specialising in niche markets is vital if we are to avoid the downward spiral.

Speaking of a suppressed market, what measures should local tyre manufacturers be looking to implement in the interests of long-term survival?

As I mentioned, specialising into specific market segments is one way of ensuring the sustainability of our production plants. And we need to keep on exploring opportunities north of our borders into Africa.

We also need to be mindful of the change in demographics in our part of the world. The car park has changed to cater for an emerging middle class made up of previously



disadvantaged people, and this significant change in the landscape needs to be embraced by means of strategic initiatives. Our marketing drive has to change as we strive to understand their needs better. We need to learn how to effectively communicate with this new emerging market sector and shift from our traditional marketing strategies of old.

This doesn't only apply to our marketing strategies, but to our organizations as a whole, including our management style. As with our operation in Ghana, we believe that localising these legal entities by gradually reducing the number of expat positions in favour of local talent, is essential to long-term success in Africa.

We also need to effectively relay the message to our foreign investors that developing markets take time to reap rewards, but that investing in Africa for the long term is crucial, as the continent offers a myriad of growth opportunities. In our case, we are busy instituting a dedicated Middle East/Africa (MEA) unit, that will be responsible for our region and also produce suitable products for Africa to be released into the market in 2020.

What should the dealer trade be doing in order to ensure growth and sustainability?

Above all, my advice would be to diversify their service offering. It is my hope that the dealer trade foresaw tough times ahead some years back and that dealers began expanding

their service offering by way of underbody components, service repairs for brakes, shock absorbers and the like. Margins on tyre sales continue to shrink and retailers will only survive if they have a broader range of products and services to fall back on.

There is also a big opportunity for tyre dealers to expand into the truck tyre market and all of the services related to this sector. It's essential that dealers expand their product and service offerings to a more diverse range of customers.

Dealers are under huge pressure in terms of cash flow and gross profits, which in turn places additional pressure on your logistics concepts. We, as manufacturers, have a massive responsibility to protect the dealers. After all, they are entrusting their business to us and vice versa. Every dealer who is forced to close his doors due to escalating debt is an investment lost!

In that sense, it is important to encourage ongoing dialogue between the two parties, to listen to their challenges and issues and to provide whatever assistance we can. Personal relationships are key which is why we run three Roadshows annually aimed at connecting with our dealer channels.

Tell us more about your Roadshow initiative.

The programme was started four years ago as a way for us to get to know our franchisees and familiarise ourselves with their individual issues. In addition to these Roadshows which are conducted by our Regional management teams, the Executive Committee pays the dealers an annual visit in September so as to better understand their unique challenges in their respective markets, a formula that has proved successful.

Our dealers need to be heard. The route to market in South Africa is slim pickings so we need to protect our channels in every way we can.

What do you believe are some of the more pressing issues facing the South African tyre sector at this time?

I would have to say, regulating the second-hand tyre market. We are seeing a dangerously high number of worn or damaged tyres finding their way back to market which poses serious danger to the retail trade, not to mention the unsuspecting consumer. Often, the average motorist is unaware of the dangers associated with driving on a tyre that ideally, should be relegated to the scrap pile.

Is this not a consequence of the current waste tyre crisis and the fact that the collections and disposal of waste tyres is not functioning as it should?

That is true, however, let's keep in mind that the dealer bears the responsibility of ensuring that a worn or damaged tyre cannot be reused by cutting the bead before that tyre leaves the premises. Unfortunately, this is not being done by a large percentage of the dealer trade.

What should the industry be doing to educate the consumer on the dangers of driving on worn tyres?

CTSA, for one, is changing its marketing approach to one that is experiential. We are encouraging our stores to educate their customers by means of video clips and other visual material. Of course, there is no better way for counter staff to relay this important information to their customers than to experience it for themselves. Our plan for 2020 is to target our distribution channels, in particular, the counter sales teams, with an online training programme, followed by an experiential day, to be held in different centres and venues around the country.

This is encouraging to hear Shaun. I'm open to correction, but I would wager that this is a first in the local industry. It's good to see tyre companies targeting this important group of employees.

Consumers are becoming more informed,

thanks to the online platform. We have recognised this. As such, counter staff need to be able to actively debate with them and assist them in making an informed decision.

Our counter staff are probably the most important link in the chain. They are at the very coalface of the operation.

To conclude, how would you describe Continental's commitment to the African continent?

The mere fact that, as a company, we elected to support the Africa Cup of Nations in 2019, 2021 and 2023, speaks volumes for our

commitment to the continent as a whole. It clearly demonstrates our intention to continue servicing African markets.

We are here to stay. Our plant is here to stay. And with distributors now tied up in almost every African nation, we plan on capitalising on these opportunities, particularly in light of the African Union's objectives, which if they materialise, will stand us in good stead, provided we are suitably prepared.

CTSA not only remains committed to its South African business, it has introduced a series of initiatives aimed at uplifting the



“ We have elected to support the Africa Cup of Nations in 2020, this speaks volumes for our commitment to this country and the continent as a whole. *Shaun Uys* ”

community. The Youth Programme and SOS village are but two of the projects the company is heavily involved in. We will provide more detail on these projects in a later issue.

As for Shaun, when he is not travelling on business or conjuring up new ways to improve productivity and sustainability for CTSA, he spends time with his family. He is married and has two children of school-going age.

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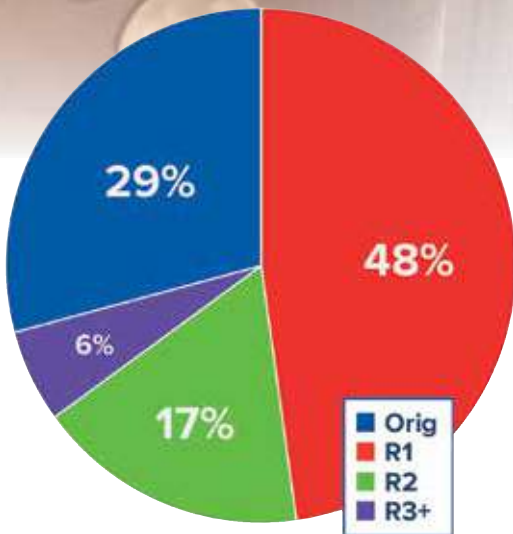
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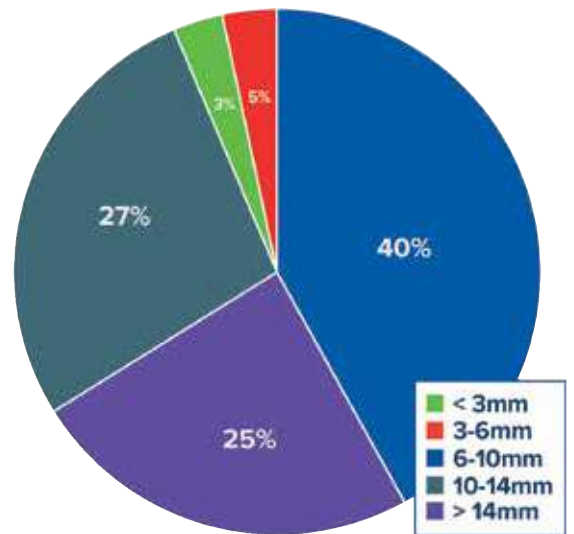
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WILL YOUR INSURANCE POLICY COVER TYRE CRIME?

Following coverage of the recent spate of tyre hi-jackings in the Spring edition, SA TREADS has been inundated with calls from industry relating their own experiences. Clearly, tyre crime shows no signs of abating. If anything, it is increasing. But what recourse, if any, do victims have? Will their current insurance policies cover the losses? We set out to investigate.

“One of our vehicles, a H-100 Hyundai, was hi-jacked in April 2016 and another in October of this year in Pretoria,” commented Paul Bosman of the Hi-Q Autowiel group.

“What is hugely concerning is that there was another attempted hi-jacking yesterday,” he added. “This happened on the N4 highway, when three male perpetrators in a white Ford

Eco Sport, tried to force the driver off the road, gesturing with a hand gun for him to pull over. Thankfully, he managed to make a U-turn on the highway and escape.

“The modus operandi appears similar, with either one or two vehicles involved and its occupants – of which there are at least three – using pistols for intimidation. The driver

is pulled over or surprised and the vehicle driven to a secluded spot. Next, the tyres and all personal valuables are stolen with our sign-written vehicle and the driver abandoned.

“In the most recent incident which involved three males and one female accomplice, a blue light was used to force the driver off the road,” said Bosman.



According to Richard Hood, Director of Apio Risk Services, tyres are targeted by their very nature, as they are easily traded in the informal sector. He confirmed that tyre thefts were on the increase, adding that aside from vehicle hijackings, armed gangs were entering premises and getting away with substantial value of goods.

“In our experience, these losses often originate from within the organisation, where security guards or employees are involved. Careful selection of employees and guards is vital in preventing these losses,” cautioned Hood.

He added: “Cover for both theft at operating

premises as well as goods in transit must be considered. Crime insurance tends to be expensive in South Africa so it is important to have a robust risk management plan to deal with any tyre thefts. Tracking devices (even multiple), should be a minimum standard in vehicles and premises should be well secured with consideration to offsite monitoring.

“Tyre companies should always look at a worst-case scenario and ask themselves, ‘what could put us out of business?’ Rubber and tyres are highly combustible materials, especially during any manufacturing process where extrusion and/or heating processes are applied. As a result, particular attention

should be paid to Property, Fire and Business Interruption insurance. Thankfully, these are relatively inexpensive forms of cover in relation to the overall asset value,” explained Hood.

He further encouraged tyre companies to consider taking out Liability coverage, which he claimed was an important adjunct to any tyre insurance portfolio. Many incidents are caused on our roads by wheels and tyres flying off vehicles, often with serious consequences. As such, both Defective Workmanship and Products Liability should be procured by tyre companies to ensure they have coverage to deal with these incidents.

Continental Demonstrates

DANGERS OF DRIVING ON INFERIOR TYRES

The South African Motoring Press was recently invited to attend an important event at the Aldo Scribante race track outside of Port Elizabeth, to demonstrate the dangers of fitting cheap, inferior budgets to one's vehicle. Hosted by Continental Tyre SA, the day consisted of an innovative series of back-to-back tyre testing, using two popular vehicles: the rear-wheel drive BMW 3-Series and front-wheel drive Ford Fiesta. **SA TREADS** was there.

One of the BMW 3-series together with one of the Ford Fiestas were fitted with premium tyres (in this case, the ContiSportContact5), while the identical set of cars was fitted with a foreign budget make of tyre*, to provide real-world, direct comparisons to the premium product.

"The purpose of this event was to test the capabilities of different types of tyres, including the tread design, compound and construction to see what the differences are in terms of performance and safety," explained Ryan Visagie, Product Communications Manager, Continental Tyre SA.

"When people buy a new car, it is usually equipped with a tyre specifically designed for that vehicle, and is optimised to perform under all driving conditions. However, when they come to replacing the tyres, owners will often make an uninformed decision and buy a tyre that is significantly cheaper than the car's original tyres.

"As a result, they will not benefit from the same levels of performance or safety. Unfortunately, they only really get to experience this in an emergency situation where the cheaper tyre is simply not able to perform at the same level as the original equipment tyre," added Visagie.

"Accordingly, what we set out to achieve with this event was to create a better understanding of the differences in performance and overall safety between premium and budget tyres. The tests conducted today have demonstrated how markedly different the tyres are, especially in the wet," he said.

To put this theory to the test, a group of 12 motoring journalists representing a variety of media from across the country, gathered with interest to see what the day had in store.

A variety of tests were conducted in both wet and dry conditions, including





Premium versus budget tyres face off





emergency braking on the circuit's main straight, along with a slalom test that evaluated the tyres' ability to retain traction under extreme loads during rapid changes of direction.

This was followed by laps of the Aldo Scribante circuit on each tyre, with the challenging hairpin corner at the far end of the circuit being tackled in the wet to test the level of grip under harsh braking and cornering.

From a personal perspective, the differences between the two opposing vehicles were like night and day, with my budget tyre-shod vehicle spinning dangerously out of control on the hairpin corner. I also noticed a marked difference in performance during the slalom exercise, which I am attributing to a flare up of an old whiplash injury that needed physical therapy on my return to the office the next day.


Claimed Visagie: "Although the modern safety

systems in both cars are able to assist the driver up to a point, the tyre is still the most important safety feature of any vehicle, as it is the only point of contact with the road surface. In the cars with the cheapies these systems had to intervene much earlier and a lot more frequently than was required with the premium tyres, making it difficult to slow the vehicle in time or stay on the road."

The situation was even worse when the driving aids such as the Electronic Stability Control (ESC) were switched off for demonstration purposes, (I chose to keep mine on!), with the cars shod with the budget brand more difficult to control, particularly in the wet, where the loss of grip happened much earlier, was far more dramatic and a lot less predictable.

What the consumer may not be aware of is the significant R&D and investment that goes into the design, development, manufacture and testing of a premium tyre.

"These tests revealed why budget tyres are so much cheaper, as they are not designed at the same level, no do they have the best compounds or undergo an intensive research and development process.

 *The purpose of this exercise was not to discredit reputed imported makes of tyres which pose no safety risk to the motorist, but rather, to dissuade consumers from purchasing tyres purely on price. Most of the imported tyre brands available in South Africa are represented by legitimate businesses and are made to a world-class standard, but some less credible, largely unknown brands are finding their way into our market. These lesser known tyre makes could pose grave danger for the unsuspecting motorist and are to be avoided.*

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WASTE TYRE MANAGEMENT CONTROVERSY:



With the highly contentious matter of the management of waste tyre collections and their disposal in limbo, industry has been in consultation with Minister Barbara Dallas Greecy to discuss the way forward. Certain important resolutions have transpired since a joint meeting between the Minister, the SATMC, TIASA, RMI and NAAMSA on October 21. *SA TREADS* reports.

Section 28 closed, Section 29 process to follow

Representatives of the SATMC (South African Tyre Manufacturers Conference) offered the notion that the previously adopted Section 28 process – public invitation of waste tyre plans – has proven to be unsuccessful and that the DEFF should now initiate the Section 29 process (of a state-owned plan).

Said Darren Hayes-Powell, Chairperson of the SATMC: “So far the Section 28 process has been unsuccessful in achieving the goals of the Waste Tyre Regulations and as the major contributor to the waste tyre levy, the SATMC believes that the DEFF should now move towards implementing the provisions of the Section 29 process.”

Industry suggested that a Section 29 process be followed whereby the plan will be owned and controlled by government. This, in theory,

should be more sustainable in the long term, they claimed, and from a continuity point of view, would mean there would be no need for a ‘new plan’ every five years in an attempt to re-invent the wheel. Instead, the plan would go out to tender on a regular basis.

Rather than one company controlling all facets of the process, it was suggested that the plan be written in such a way that it could be broken up into various parts, i.e. transport/logistics, recycling, companies who can use waste tyres as fuel (cement kilns etc).

Following the meeting, Section 28(1) has been closed and will no longer be considered as a viable option for the management of waste





tyres given the history with REDISA. Moreover, the Minister declined both the submitted SATRUCO and TWAMISA plans, finding them unacceptable in nature. According to our sources who attended the meeting, Greecy made it abundantly clear that it was the right of any aggrieved party to sue her and her Department, should they believe they had a case, but that she would defend any such actions, as she did not believe that Section 28 (1) was the correct way forward.

Furthermore, she indicated that management companies and monopolies were not looked upon favourably and in all likelihood, would not be considered for future plans.

Explained Hayes-Powell: "The SATMC is concerned with the current status of waste tyre collection, storage and processing in South Africa. Whilst it acknowledges that the Waste Bureau is fulfilling its function as a temporary solution pending the Department

of Environmental Affairs, Forestry & Fisheries (DEFF), the industry urgently requires the next steps with respect to the way forward on this matter.

"The Minister had demonstrated a clear understanding of the challenges of the waste tyre matter and we are confident of a pragmatic solution aligned to our preferred way forward" he said.

Added Charl de Villiers, Chairperson of TIASA (Tyre Importers Association of South Africa): "Currently, the Waste Bureau has been tasked to remove waste tyres from the market, however, the Minister indicated that she did not believe this to be a long term solution and that she would try and address burning issues on a case by case basis until such time as a plan has been formally approved and implemented, as opposed to allocating more resources and staff to a process she believed was not the way forward. For the time being, the RMI has been invited to forward details of affected areas where collections are not being made, to the Minister.

"It was also decided that various government and non-government departments should be selected to form part of a Facilitation Committee to consult with industry and various recycling experts in the field, so as to draw up a sustainable Waste Tyre Plan for South Africa," stated de Villiers.

According to our sources, Minister Greecy has set an ambitious timeline for the approval and roll out of a new plan by July 2020. Industry will be consulted prior to the plan going out for public comment. In addition, industry experts in relation to waste tyres, have been invited to take part in these meetings to ensure that only the best practices are adopted.

In the meanwhile, TIASA is also in discussion with ACMP (Association of Cementitious Materials Producers) to find ways to get rid of our growing waste tyre piles across South Africa.

"We are of the opinion that we need to involve waste experts (not management companies), and potential users of waste tyres to find a solution to our problem. ACMP member companies could be one such solution," argued de Villiers.

"The ball is now in the Minister's court and we eagerly await the next phase. We support the Department in its views and look forward to working with all respective parties to find a solution," he concluded.

150 000 radial truck tyres processed per annum despite waste tyre stalemate



Dr Mehran Zarrebini

Despite massive uncertainty surrounding South Africa's Waste Tyre Management Plan (WTMP), the Hammarsdale based Mathe Group is showing just what can happen when over 150 000 radial truck tyres are reduced to rubber crumb and then re-engineered into a range of new products. SA TREADS investigates.

"There is quite a lot of information circulating about REDISA, the failure of a new waste tyre management plan and the massive build-up of waste tyres around the country. But many in the tyre industry don't know that there's a green shoot out there processing radial truck tyres successfully," says Dr Mehran Zarrebini, head of PFE International Inc.

The British investment company bought a share in a tiny truck tyre recycling plant in New Germany, Durban, in 2015 to secure a supply of rubber crumb to manufacture acoustic underlays for carpets and acoustic cradles at the group's Van Dyck Floors plant.

Since then, capacity at Mathe Group has more than quadrupled. Mathe Group's new Hammarsdale plant operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and has been under ongoing pressure to increase output.

Surprisingly, though, Dr Zarrebini is not yet keen to do so.

He believes that the answer to South Africa's waste tyre dilemma doesn't lie in increasing processing capacity but rather in developing secondary processing industries



utilising rubber crumb to create downstream products.

When it comes to both investment in waste tyre recycling and in manufacturing, he says that the roadblock is not a shortage of tyres, but a lack of demand for the end products.

Mathe Group provides the Waste Bureau with annual projections of the number of tyres required for processing and there have been few interruptions to the company's supply of waste radial truck tyres to date.

At present, he estimates that Mathe Group processes as much as 33 percent of South Africa's waste radial truck tyres. However, despite having "done the calculations", there are no plans to expand the plant to also process passenger vehicle tyres or replicate this successful business plan in other provinces.

"The process is very specific and would require various types of investment. You cannot just throw any tyres into a machine and hope for the best. It's a lot more complex than that. Specific kinds of tyres affect the machine in different ways impacting on efficiencies," Dr Zarrebini says.

Although there is no reason why Mathe's business plan cannot be replicated or developed, this is unlikely without viable data or direction.

"At this point, we unfortunately have no meaningful information that allows us to determine if we are having any impact, let alone what is happening within the industry

as a whole. While investing in order to process passenger tyres could minimise our risk in terms of supply, until we know what is going to happen going forward, we find ourselves with a predicament," he adds.

Government also needs to look at fulfilling another key part of its initial WTMP – helping to create demand for products manufactured from the rubber crumb that results from the processing of waste tyres.

"The demand is not there if you look at the industry. There is minimal infrastructural development that would use rubber crumb as infill in sports fields. Many of the proposed multi-billion-rand road upgrades that could use rubber crumb as a constituent of bitumen are only likely to be rolled out in years to come. These are long term projects. What do processors do in the interim?" he asks.

Dr Zarrebini points out that this makes handing out operating licences to emerging businesses pointless and is partly why many of the companies that were operating when PFE International invested in Mathe Group in 2016 have closed down.

Now, instead of approaching the DEA with business plans, Dr Zarrebini says that Mathe Group is inundated with requests for offtake agreements from those wanting to enter the industry.

"While we would be happy to see the industry grow, it doesn't make sense for us to do this," he says.

Instead of waiting for government to create

demand, Mathe Group has proactively developed its own downstream products. The rubber crumb produced by Mathe Group is now used for the manufacture of rubber flooring, paving, inter locking rubber mats and acoustic underlays for carpets. These are exported to 50 countries across the world.

Mathe Group also has a wide customer base that buys rubber crumb for use as an infill for sports fields using artificial grass, for inclusion in modified bitumen for road resurfacing and for the manufacture of non-slip paint and ballistics equipment.

The company has even invested millions in machinery to manufacture some of these downstream products itself and is working hard to secure market acceptance in a sluggish economy.

Adamant that the private sector cannot grow the tyre recycling industry without the support of government, Dr Zarrebini believes that government's role should not be confined to transport as it is now through the Waste Bureau.

"We need a far broader vision to resolve South Africa's growing waste tyre management problem. Trucks will not stop using our roads and the build-up of used tyres is growing. Instead of just focusing on the logistics of collecting tyres, the new plan needs to look at policies that require the usage of value added products such as rubber paving for walkways and areas around buildings for example. Only then will we have a sustainable solution that could create both new businesses and jobs," he concludes.

The equivalent of 30 jumbo jets crash in South Africa every year



•SA Road Federation calls for a coordinated national effort to address road crash crisis

President of the South African Road Federation (SARF), Saied Solomons, has called for a nation-building programme that underscores road behaviour and which is coordinated to reach into the heart of every enforcement area across South Africa. "All road stakeholders need to collaborate and accountability needs to be upheld at every level - from road users to officials and right through the reporting lines in road and traffic authorities," he said. Solomons was speaking at the Federation's Transport Month event held in Pretoria last week.

"Statistics are not lacking when it comes to the carnage on our roads – the figures translate to over 30 jumbo jet crashes across our country every year. We have initiatives that run at national, regional and local government level to address the scourge of road crashes. However, they are not sufficiently integrated, and we are not moving closer to reaching any of our road safety targets, many of which are aligned to international targets as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.

"The National Road Safety Strategy launched in 2017 remains a document that pays lip service to changing the behaviour and attitude of road users by 2030. Nearly four years into this plan, lawless still rules our roads and not the law. It is not guiding or driving implementation of the strategy across the road system," said Solomons.

Solomons believes that pockets of excellent work are taking place around road safety, but he says organisations and authorities are working in silos which diminishes the impact of their programmes.

"In 21st Century SA, technology can be far better used to help plan, implement, manage and monitor road safety efforts at local, regional and national levels.

"The Road Accident Fund remains largely a reactive mechanism funded by road users at the fuel tanks and then handed out after the carnage. This levy should rather be proactively promoting and deepening enforcement to influence driver behaviour.

"Driver behaviour must be addressed through positive incentives for drivers as opposed only penalties, while officials need to be properly rewarded for their hard work in enforcing the law on our roads."

According to the World Health Organisation, road traffic injuries are estimated to be the eighth leading cause of death globally. "The issue is not unique to South Africa," said Solomons, "But our statistics are. In SA, the cost of crashes amounts to 3.5% of GDP whereas in the United Kingdom, road crashes make up 1.7% of GDP and in the United States 1.8%."

Drink driving, speed, seat belts and child restraints

The SA Road Federation is part of the Global Road Safety Partnership which has highlighted four key road safety initiatives that developing countries should concentrate on, namely, drink driving, speed, seat belts and child restraints.

Solomons said, "If we could address these four issues across all three tiers of government agencies dealing with law enforcement on our roads, we will be taking a big step forward in reducing fatalities."

The Global Road Safety Partnership has shown that a 5% reduction in speed reduces crashes by 30% and emphasises that setting and enforcing speed limits as one of the most effective measures in reducing road crashes. It reports that drivers with a blood alcohol concentration of between 0.02 and 0.05 grams/decilitre have at least a three times greater risk of dying in a crash. It also reveals that wearing a seatbelt reduces the risk of a fatality among drivers and front-seat occupants by 45-50% while use of correctly fitted child restraints appropriate for a child's size and weight significantly reduces death or injury.

"As part of this Partnership, we advocate widespread, consistent and highly visible law enforcement to send a clear message to drivers that speeding will not be tolerated. Similarly, we advocate widespread random

SA

UK

USA

Tiger Wheel & Tyre reinvents X-Sure Road Hazard Guarantee

Tiger Wheel & Tyre has allegedly reinvented its X-SURE® product as a superior quality, highly affordable road hazard guarantee. The new and improved X-SURE is a motorist's guarantee that irreparable tyre damage won't leave them out of pocket.

At the point of purchasing new tyres, Tiger Wheel & Tyre customers can add on the purchase of X-SURE for a 12- or 24-month period, for a once-off affordable payment. Thereafter, should their qualifying tyre/s suffer irreparable damage, they will receive a credit equal to 100% of the cost of a new tyre, up to the maximum amount specified or the guaranteed amount selected at the time of purchase.

X-SURE has some terrific features including no cover limits, no tread usage penalty, no excess, an easy claim process and available on new and used tyres, among others.

Also included in the new X-SURE stable, is a product that enhances the manufacturer's road hazard guarantee included with some new tyre purchases. X-TRA Cover is an affordable top-up benefit that pays in the difference between the replacement value of the tyre being replaced and the tyre manufacturer's road hazard warranty, in the form of a credit towards the purchase. So, if the manufacturer's warranty offers a credit of 75% towards the replacement tyre, X-TRA Cover will chip in the 25% difference.

Additional Ts and Cs apply and can be viewed on the retailer's website.



breath testing as frequently as possible and especially around bars and restaurants.

"Effective enforcement of seat belt laws must take place and correctly fitted and appropriate child restraints in vehicles is a non-negotiable: those who are non-compliant must be penalised," said Solomons.

Solomons added that 38% of fatalities on our roads are pedestrians, who are vulnerable road users. "To reduce pedestrian fatalities, we need to address driver behaviour, educate pedestrians, and also make sure that there are ample pedestrian walking areas, including bridges for people to move more easily, quickly and safely between work and home."

MEC for Roads and Transport in Gauteng, Jacob Mamabolo, delivered the keynote address at the SA Road Federation event, when he unpacked the role of transport in Gauteng's economy. Mamabolo called on SA Road Federation to be the voice of roads in the country, a challenge which Solomons welcomed.

"Our work focuses on training and capacity development of road sector stakeholders, promoting road safety and ensuring our roads are adequately and fairly funded. I have no doubt that in the coming year, the SA Road Federation will rise to the challenge that the Premiere has charged us with. This has, however, been a sombre end to 2019's Transport Month," concluded Solomons.

A new era in mobile tyre fitment has arrived in Europe

Over the past two years there has increasing growth in the concept of mobile tyre servicing throughout all European countries and this progressive momentum continues to gather speed and interest.

Consequently an increasing amount of tyre retail outlets in every European country has virtually 'responded' to customer demand and introduced their own mobile tyre fitting service as an additional facility to their services.

The current general perception in Europe is that the mobile tyre fitment market accounts for around 10-15 per cent of the overall new tyre sales market in the market however it is difficult to get an exact figure as many tyre retailers do not segregate the income from sales outside of their tyre centres. But the most recent statistics indicate that mobile tyre fitment involves over 60,000 visits a month.

It is also interesting to note that although at first most mobile tyre fitters visited the homes of their customers, now the growing trend is to have new tyres fitted in the office car park whilst drivers are at work. It is estimated that home fitment still has the slight edge in popularity at 60%-40% but I can see a time in the not too distant future where the division will be a lot closer and even equal at 50%-50%.

I recently surveyed exactly what has led to this potentially huge interest by motorists of having tyres replaced away from the traditional retail centre where they waited whilst the work was carried out. What is very clear is the increasingly popular 'online shopping lifestyle'



By John Stone

that Europe lives in has had a very major impact as it is a convenient and timesaving way of buying a product and having it delivered to your door. So quite naturally the sale of tyres are also going down this modern route.

In this new age of mobile tyre fitment services, motorists can shop for replacement tyres at their leisure on retail Websites then have their choice of brand fitted either at their home or place of work. It is also significant to note that the business fleet market is also now appreciating the many benefits of mobile tyre fitment services because as an employer because with a team of sales representatives on the road they can book to have all their fleets tyre's checked and replaced (where necessary) whilst holding their monthly sales meeting for example.

I have also examined what tyre retail dealers feel about this growing new direction in new tyre sales. Let's not forget that mobile tyre servicing is definitely 'not' a direct competitor or alternative to the more traditional methods of workshop tyre sales which will still be

available to carry out those other more heavy and complex tyre services such as alignment and outer body repairs.

In fact the general impression I have received from a number of both multi-national and independent tyre dealers is of resounding enthusiasm as it is appreciated that there is a very real business potential in having a fleet of tyre fitting vehicles on the road that are fully equipped and ready to replace tyres at a location of the customer's choice.

So tyre fitting outside of the workshop is now very much part of the market in Europe and every day I see mobile tyre technicians driving around in their fully equipped vans on their way to assist a customer. Of course like all new concepts, there has to be a potential 'downside' to this flexible service and in this case it is the danger of tyre technicians sometimes placing themselves in danger of being hit and injured by passing vehicles as they work on a vehicle at the kerbside. However new technology to remove this danger is already on their way.

The main problem with mobile tyre fitting vehicles up to now has always been the amount of equipment they have had to carry onboard. But I have seen for myself that the inside of these vehicles (at least in Europe) is about to change dramatically as a new revolutionary single unit covering all aspects of tyre changing has recently become available which in my opinion will (in time) take the idea of having tyres changed and replaced to an even greater level of efficiency and popularity.



Mobile tyre fitting is becoming a popular option in Europe

A growing resentment to part-worn tyres in the UK

At the National Tyre Distributors Association (NTDA) Conference in October in the UK (which is still part of the European Union until at least January 2020) it was announced that members have unanimously said 'No' to the sale of part-worn tyres in an independent survey.

The NTDA has also been significantly instrumental in helping the National Trading Standards Office prosecute tyre dealers who illegally sell defective part-worn tyres. Also following the survey NTDA's Chief Executive, Stefan Hay has launched a new marketing campaign that is designed to assist members explain to their customers why part-worn tyres are not available at their retail outlets throughout the country.

A series of striking posters, web banners and advertisements using the clear headline – "NTDA Members don't sell Part-Worn tyres are currently available to all members.

Stefan adds, "I am delighted that this campaign has the total support of our membership as in the absence of a meaningful enforcement regime, an outright ban on these dangerous tyres remains the only solution to ensure the safety of motorists.

"This forceful action follows inspections



Stefan Hay – NTDA Chief Executive

carried out over several years into the sale of part-worn tyres which indicate serious breaches of safety including irresponsible and unsafe repairs, exposed cords, bead damage and evidence of run-flat damage resulting

in illegal, defective and under-inflated tyres being directly responsible for more than 40 per cent of all vehicle related deaths in the UK in recent years. At the same time defective or under-inflated tyres are also responsible for 35 per cent of all casualties on the roads caused by vehicle defects."

It is also interesting to note that in the survey, 51 per cent of NTDA members rejected the idea that part-worn tyres are acceptable if tested and inspected as part-worn and almost 90 per cent would like to see "independent Audits" and a licence to sell introduced in order to 'police' part-worn dealers. Finally 78 per cent of members are actively calling for an environmental protection tariff on these tyres which are discarded by other European countries.

**YOU WOULDN'T BUY THIS CAR
SO WHY BUY ITS TYRES?**



NTDA NTDA MEMBERS DON'T SELL
PART WORN TYRES



The NTDA Part-Worn Poster - Typical damage caused by part worn tyres in Europe

Tyresafe launch van tyre safety campaign

Tyresafe, one of the UK and Europe's leading and most active tyre safety charities has recently launched its latest campaign which this time focuses on van tyre safety.

There are literally millions of vans on European roads and at least 50 per cent more than in 2000 which travel well over a billion miles each week and account for over 56 billion Euros to the respective economies. Therefore Tyresafe is urging all van drivers and small commercial fleets to ensure they regularly check their tyres and also take into



consideration how much load is carried as overloading is equally important for the safe maintenance of tyres.

In fact overloading of vans is the most common offence identified in random European roadside checks which can carry a fine of over £800 (Euros 933) and also accounts for 70 per cent of occasions when vans are officially removed from the road as unsafe.

Tyresafe Chairman, Stuart Jackson says, "We hope that by launching this campaign we can make van drivers more aware that having inferior tyres and overloading their vehicles seriously affects their safety when travelling."



Goodyear to supply European Le Mans Series teams

- **FIA World Endurance Championship tyres to be developed for LMP2 teams for 2020**
- **LMGTE category to be exclusively supplied by Goodyear in 2020.**

Following Goodyear's comeback to the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC), the tyre company has announced that it will offer the same specifications of tyres to teams in the top class (LMP2) of the 2020 European Le Mans Series.

Last month, Goodyear's historic return to WEC marked a fresh commitment to top-level sportscar racing for the 14-time Le Mans 24 hour winning tyre brand. Since the comeback announcement, Goodyear teams have scored podium finishes and set pole position at the Fuji 6-hour race.

The cars in the top-class of the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) run to the same specification as WEC, and this will allow Goodyear to accelerate the development of their latest generation endurance racing

tyres as Ben Crawley, Director, Goodyear Racing, explains:

"Goodyear is an industry leader in developing ultra high-performance tyres for sports cars. Our WEC comeback applies our knowledge and technology in one of the most demanding championships in racing. To extend this development to ELMS means we get to work with a wider range of cars, teams and drivers as well as showcase the Goodyear brand at some of Europe's most prestigious circuits"

In parallel, ELMS has announced that all the entrants in the 2020 LMGTE class, for production-based supercars, will run on Goodyear Eagle F1 SuperSport racing tyres. The LMGTE class is open to a wide range of cars, including the Ferrari F488 GTE EVO, Porsche 911 RSR and Aston Martin Vantage V8.

"The LMGTE category fits perfectly with Goodyear's recent launch of the Eagle F1 SuperSport road-legal tyre. The ultimate version of this range, the Eagle F1

SuperSport RS has been homologated for the Porsche 911 GT2 RS and GT3 RS, and sizes are also being developed to fit models from other premium sports car manufacturers. In ELMS, we will supply a tyre range that offers the performance, parity, consistency and durability needed for a diverse range of cars" Ben added.

G rard Neveu - ELMS CEO: "Goodyear is one of the iconic names in Motorsport. With fourteen 24 Hours of Le Mans victories, they bring vast experience as well as their prestige, investment and technology to the European Le Mans Series. We are proud that Goodyear have chosen WEC and ELMS to headline their return to international sportscar racing."

The European Le Mans Series is the world's leading continental endurance racing series with a series of 4-hour races at Barcelona, Monza, Le Castellet, Silverstone, Spa-Francorchamps and Portimao. The 2020 season starts with the 4 hours of Barcelona on 5th April.

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Hunter Engineering Company named 2019 SEMA Manufacturer of the Year

Hunter Engineering was named SEMA Manufacturer of the Year at the 2019 SEMA Industry Awards Banquet Nov. 7 for making “outstanding strides in the manufacturing category.”

The SEMA Manufacturer of the Year Award recipient meets rigorous criteria, including demonstrating outstanding business practices, establishing innovative processes and products, investing in the well-being of employees, exhibiting a high degree of corporate responsibility, protecting company brand equity and providing exceptional customer service to customers, SEMA officials say.

At the 2019 SEMA Show, Hunter professionals showed new and existing products to several thousand customers in attendance. The company demonstrated most of its product line at the show, including nine new products and 15 enhanced products.

“We are proud to be a part of SEMA and receive the industry’s top Manufacturer of the Year award,” said Beau Brauer, president of Hunter Engineering Company.

The SEMA Manufacturer of the Year award was established to honor a manufacturing company for outstanding contributions to



the automotive industry during the past year. Blue Man Group joined this year’s SEMA banquet, mixing in short entertainment to add to the evening’s festivities.

Other winners include:

- SEMA Person of the Year: Dan Kahn, Kahn Media, Inc.
- SEMA Gen-III Innovator of the Year: Chris Candido, Turn 14 Distribution
- SEMA Rep Agency of the Year: Kunzman & Associates
- SEMA Warehouse Distributor of the Year: AllPro Distributing

www.tirereview.com

Yokohama sweeps SEMA New Product Awards Tire Category

The Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) announced its Best New Products Award winners Tuesday at the 2019 SEMA Show with Yokohama Tire sweeping the tyre and related products category.

Yokohama’s Geolandar X-AT extreme all-terrain tyre was named the “Best New Tire,” and the UHP Advan Apex as well as the Geolandar

X-CV, the company’s luxury SUV and crossover tyre, earned runner-up awards.

“Winning a prestigious SEMA New Product Award is a major achievement, but sweeping the category is unprecedented and a testament to the strides we’ve made in terms of our new products,” said Andrew Briggs, Yokohama’s vice president of marketing and product management. “2019 has been a watershed year for Yokohama as we’ve launched nine new consumer tyres, including the X-AT, Apex and X-CV. We’re honored that the SEMA judges recognised our new product development and bestowed us with these awards.”

SEMA’s annual New Product Awards competition recognises outstanding achievements in the development of products being introduced to the automotive specialty-equipment market at the SEMA Show. Products are judged in 16 award categories, and each category has one winner and two runners-up.

Nearly 3,000 products were entered into the 16 different showcase categories to be considered for a SEMA New Product Award this year. Winners were selected based on a variety of factors that included superiority of innovation, technical achievement, quality and workmanship, consumer appeal and marketability, and more.





Michelin Receives 2019 SmartWay Excellence Award

Michelin North America, Inc. received a 2019 SmartWay Excellence award for outstanding environmental performance and leadership, the company recently reported.

Michelin was one of 17 shipper and logistics companies to receive this distinction at the American Trucking Association's (ATA) Management Conference & Exhibition in San Diego, Calif. The award is the United States Environmental Protection Agency's highest recognition for leadership in freight, supply chain, energy and environmental performance, achieved by improving freight efficiency and contributing to cleaner air throughout the supply chain, Michelin says.

As part of its sustainability efforts, Michelin says it continually

analyzes shipping routes to optimise freight flow and reduce empty miles and has a dedicated process to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, water and energy consumption, and material impacts on the environment through the Michelin Environmental Footprint indicator.

Michelin manufacturing facilities and warehouses also strive to reduce each location's power consumption, optimise the layout and favor multimodal solutions to reduce the impact on the environment.

New AI-based technology from Sumitomo Rubber is launched

A New AI-Based Technology Designed to Accelerate the Development of Tyre Performance Sustaining Technology has been released by Sumitomo Rubber Industries, Ltd. The company said it was pleased to announce that it had completed the development of a new AI-based technology that utilises real-world data on tyre raw materials, as well as advanced analytical data on the internal structures of rubber, to perform a wide range of tasks, including not only precisely estimating rubber properties, but also detecting structural changes that occur during use in order to predict the properties of rubber after use. They call this versatile new technology "Tyre Leap AI Analysis." Taking full advantage of this groundbreaking technology, the Sumitomo Rubber Group plans to accelerate the development of "Performance Sustaining Technology"¹, one of the key development trends of our "SMART TYRE CONCEPT," which aims to contribute to the realisation of a sustainable Mobility Society for the future

by developing high-performance tyres that provide both safety and peace of mind.

*1. Technology that aims to suppress the degradation of tyre performance that occurs due to wear and the passage of time, allowing tyres to maintain like-new performance for longer.

The rubber used to make tyres is actually a compound composed of many different materials, including polymers (such as natural and synthetic rubber), reinforcing agents (such as carbon black and silica), crosslinking agents and additives. Tyre performance depends on many interlocking factors related to the proportions of these various materials, the structures that they form in combination and so forth. As the internal structures of rubber are exceedingly complex, there are limits to what human beings can accomplish when it comes to analysing them, both in terms of the time required for analysis and the precision of analysis results.

Thus, our newly developed "Tyre Leap AI

Analysis" utilises advanced AI-based analysis technology² to analyse (for example) electron microscope imagery of tyre rubber compounds in order to achieve high-precision analysis that far exceeds human capabilities, thereby making it possible to derive accurate estimates of rubber properties from structural data found in this imagery. Meanwhile, combining data on the individual raw materials contained in a rubber compound with data on its internal structure allows for even more precise estimates of rubber properties. Further, "Tyre Leap AI Analysis" is also able to detect structural changes that occur during use by comparing used and unused rubber, meaning that this new technology has enormous potential for such future applications as predicting the properties of rubber after use.

*2. This AI-based imagery analysis technology is the result of joint research between Sumitomo Rubber Industries and Professor Miki Haseyama of Hokkaido University.

Bridgestone to continue support of the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge by 2030 as Title Sponsor



David Ridgway, South Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment (right), Masaaki Tsuya, Chairman of the Board, Chief Executive Officer and Representative Executive Officer, Bridgestone Corporation (left)

Bridgestone Corporation (Bridgestone) announced its intent to continue supporting the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge (BWSC) as a title sponsor at a ceremony held on October 20th. The partnership is based on an agreement with the Tourism Bureau of the South Australian Government that hosts the BWSC, and will last for 10 more years.

The BWSC is the world's foremost solar car race which travels a total of 3,000km (1,860miles) from Darwin to Adelaide in Australia. It started in 1987 with the purpose to contribute to the development of solar cars, support young engineers, and contribute to the environment while using a new power source: solar light. Participants are challenged to design, build and develop the world's most efficient vehicles. This year, BWSC celebrated its 15 edition.

"It is our great pleasure working with so many Talented, Creative and Inspiring teams and individuals, who stand ready to develop the next generation of mobility solution. Bridgestone just signed a ten-year extension of sponsorship agreement today. For another decade, we will continue our journey of "Dream Bigger" and "Go Farther". Let's keep on dreaming bigger, going farther and developing next mobility solution for our own Future." said Masaaki Tsuya, Chairman of the Board, Chief

Executive Officer and Representative Executive Officer, Bridgestone Corporation.

South Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, David Ridgway, welcomed the long-term investment, thanking Bridgestone as a global industry leader, for its environmental leadership and embracing its responsibility to future generations.

"A partnership like this, not only secures the future of the world's largest, most respected solar challenge, it provides a proving ground for renewable technology and sustainable innovation, here in South Australia and around the world. The BWSC delivers millions of dollars into Australia's visitor economy, with more than \$11.9 million injected nationally and the equivalent of 102 full-time jobs created in 2017," said Minister Ridgway.

This partnership embodies the three Priority Areas of the Bridgestone global corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitment, Our Way to Serve: Mobility, People and Environment while employing innovation to improve the way people move, live, work and play. In addition to supporting the competition as a title sponsor, Bridgestone will continue to supply "ECOPIA with ologic" tyres to participating teams, contributing to the mobility of society and the reducing environment impacts, while supporting young engineers.

Point S to enter Chinese market

Point S, the global tyre and auto care network, announces its entry into the Chinese market with a local partner: Suremoov.

The Suremoov brand, since 2004, has been a specialist in bodywork and car care and a point of reference in the Chinese franchise market.

Point S is the world's largest network of automotive and tyre service centers, under one banner, with 4,350 outlets in 37 countries.

This partnership has been achieved by the Chinese group Suremoov and its 950 franchised outlets joining the International Point S network.

The two groups are proud to also announce the creation of a joint venture, Point S China, a company that will be dedicated to the development of the Point S brand in the Chinese market. This is in addition to the existing Suremoov network with a concept focused on a quick repair service and tyre sales and fittings.

This joint venture is motivated by a shared ambition regarding the Chinese market and how the respective expertise of the two parties compliments each other:

Suremoov with its perfect knowledge of the Chinese market and what makes it special, by its expertise of spare parts, oil changes and bodywork repairs and by the way that the brand has organised the running of a very successful franchise network in China.

Point S by the strength of its brand, which, although currently unknown in China, offers a strong brand platform of nearly 50 years of history and a retail concept that has been rolled out on 4 continents, including Asia, where the brand has been already successfully launched in South East of the continent. Point S will also benefit its Chinese partner and its existing network by the global expertise of tyres it has built up over half a century.

Point S China plans a first critical mass with 1,000 new Point S franchised centers within 5 years and is already working on the opening of 2 pilot centers that will be operational before the end of this year.

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*Source: Automobile Association of South Africa.

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- Auto Tyre** 1 Transvaal Road, Barkley West, Northern Cape. Tel: 053 531 0681
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