

A *FleetWatch* Initiative



Brake & Tyre Watch

SPECIAL REPORT

APRIL 2019



**Cape
Town
2018**

In November last year, the *Brake & Tyre Watch* team winged its way to Cape Town where we had an enthusiastic group of traffic officials attend our two-day training course. The Festive Season then hit and we all took a break until we met again in Pretoria in mid-March to train policing and cross-border members aligned to the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC).

While the Cape Town event was attended by a full-house of appreciative cops, I must express my disappointment at the turnout from the RTMC members in Pretoria. We had been given some 52 names of attendees and only about 25 or so bothered to turn up. And no word of explanation or apology was received on the day – or anytime afterwards - of why they weren't there. Not good.

FleetWatch and its partners put in huge effort – not to mention time and money - to offer free training

Expert training that makes a *real* difference

STATS

2 events

12 trucks tested

11 trucks failed

92% FAIL

to these guys and they don't turn up. In all our training events, this was the worst attendance. And it's not as if they don't need the training. Believe me, they do. And the training does pay off. And I'm not just saying that. We have the evidence. We have the feedback. Just ask the cops in eThekweni – or in Cape Town – or anywhere the team has been.

That said, *FleetWatch* and our *Brake & Tyre Watch* partners work on the Power of One. We were thus determined to turn a negative into a positive by motivating and training the cops that were there to be among the best and to emulate some of their Cape Town colleagues who came out of their training with a new found passion to do it right and make a positive impact on road safety.

From a knowledge empowerment perspective, the two events were great. From a truck roadworthiness perspective, they were horrible. In



**Donker-
hoek
2019**

▲ A very enthusiastic bunch of cross-border officials and police (the 25 who did turn up for the training) at the Donkerhoek Training in Pretoria. Also in the group – our trainers and various partners! At this event 8 trucks were inspected and 7 failed. EISH!



Cape Town, three trucks and one bus were taken off the road during the practical day for inspection. All four vehicles failed. In Donkerhoek, eight trucks were inspected of which seven failed – some of them with horrendous faults.

How much longer do we carry on like this? How much longer are vehicles which are totally unroadworthy going to be allowed to travel on our roads? And please note that we do not select

From a knowledge empowerment perspective, the two events were great. From a truck roadworthiness perspective, they were horrible.

vehicles that look totally shagged. Rather, the trucks are randomly selected so we are not out to just get the bad guys. In fact, two trucks operated by two prominent, respected companies in the industry failed their inspection – one by a very long margin.

Is the drop in standards due to a lack of skilled diesel mechanics? Is it due to companies running so hard that maintenance has now been put on the back-burner? Yes, we know margins are thin in the trucking industry at the moment but if this latter point is true, then the operators need to go back to the basics for a badly maintained truck is a costly truck. It is also a dangerous truck – a potential killer on the road.

I wonder, do we name and shame? That has never been the intention of *Brake & Tyre Watch* which has as its main aim to empower the cops through training. But....maybe. □



◀ The Afrikaans word 'gemors' ideally describes the inside of this cab. It's an insult to any driver and shows a total disregard for being a law abiding operator.



▲ Fines and a Discontinuation of Service notice were issued to this wreck.



▲ Not sure what this is. Can anyone tell us? Lots of blou-draad here.

Bad cabs

A driver's cab is a 'work area' and the OSHAct specifies 'safe' work areas. This cab on one of the trucks inspected in Cape Town defies the OSHAct. It is also an insult to any driver's dignity to give him a truck where his work area looks like this. It had a variety of mechanical faults as well. Take it off the road – as it was.

◀ Remember the old Check-Mate from Kivtronics. In this cab it's a decorative feature telling of good days long gone.



▲ A totally unproductive office space for any driver to work in.



▲ Home-made window winding handle. See something like this and for sure you'll find many other faults.



A sad workplace

Imagine arriving at work every morning and having to work the whole day in an office such as the one depicted here. Seldom do we get two cabs in one training exercise that are equally dismal but Cape Town provided that for us. Just because a truck is old doesn't mean it has to be a wreck – as this one was. It was discontinued. I'm not even going to try put captions to each of the pictures on this page except to say that the whole inside of this cab was a disgrace. If you want to try your luck at captions, then please send us your suggestions. This cab belongs to the rig below. If you saw it coming towards you on the road you'd think it was OK, right? Wrong! Apart from a cab that goes against the OSHAct, it had a host of other faults. And please take a look at the video titled '[A new way to start the engine](#)' elsewhere in this special report. That's this truck. Eieeesh!





**Cape
Town
2018**



▲ Under-inflation is one of the leading causes of tyre failure. It causes heat build-up which leads to premature wear, tread separation and blowouts.

One of the most visible 'components' on a truck are its tyres. They are also one of the most important components being the only link between the vehicle and the road. The main functions of a vehicle's tyres include supporting the vehicle load, transmitting traction and braking forces to the road surface, absorbing road shocks and changing and maintaining the direction of travel. So why are they so often ignored when it comes to care and maintenance? It makes no sense at all especially given that they are safety critical components. A sidewall cut can, for example, lead to a blowout and death. And all for the sake of a quick walk around pre-trip check. It just makes no sense!

Tyre care needs urgent attention



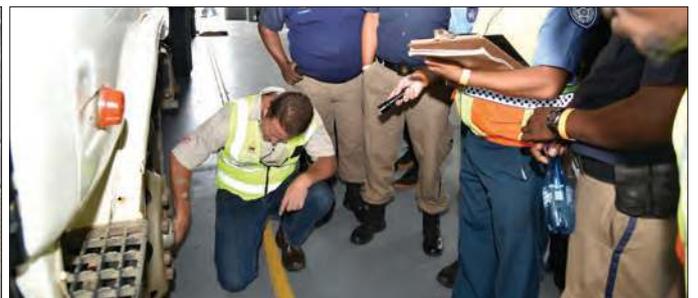
▲ The right tyre on this set of twins is illegal. It's way past the legal tread depth.



▲ It's not a case of if but when this tread will fly off.



▲ Side-wall cuts are a definite no-go. Whatever happened to pre-trip inspections?



▲ Expert trainer from Bridgestone, Dries Venter (kneeling), highlights tyre faults to a group of cops.



More tyres... Donkerhoek



▲ Oh c'mon! A bald-headed Eagle has more hair on its head than this tyre has tread on its casing. It's as smooth as ice – and some of the beading is showing. This is totally unacceptable. It is also totally illegal. C'mon guys.



▲ This smooth tyre should be replaced as it is beyond its legal tread depth and is therefore illegal. This is basic stuff so how can it go unnoticed? If there is one thing we would like to see implemented in all transport companies, it is a pre-trip inspection carried out by the driver with faults reported and corrected before the vehicle is allowed out on the road.

About our partners

Please take a look at the company names below and please will you give each of them a bow. It is these companies which have partnered with FleetWatch on its Brake & Tyre Watch programme committing time, money and expertise to enable the programme to exist. From the truck manufacturers' side, Mercedes-Benz was with us in Cape Town and Isuzu Trucks was with us in Donkerhoek. For each event, we have a different truck manufacturer on board all of whom participate gladly in the interests of raising standards and improving South Africa's dismal road safety record. Wabco was our very first partner back in 2006 when we conducted the first training exercise at City Deep. If I recall correctly, we had about 15 cops on that event. We now average between 70 and 80 cops per event. As a matter of interest, on that first event, we tested 22 trucks and failed 21 of them. What an eye-opener it was. Bridgestone joined us soon after and as we went along, other like-minded partners came on board. Our latest partner is Orafol, a world leading supplier of reflective materials whom we warmly welcome. In all, it's a dynamic team of passionate people whose prime purpose is to make a difference. For this – plus a whole lot more - we salute you and pay tribute to you over the next few pages.



we think transport





▲ Bridgestone's Dries Venter is a tyre expert of note and willingly imparts his years of knowledge and experience onto the cops.



▲ We even have a doctor on board - Dr Paul Nordengen of the CSIR who represents the South African Road Federation and explains to cops their wider role than just ticketing.

Dedicated trainers, partners and support

I was once asked what has kept me in the trucking industry for some 45 years. My answer was: "It's the people. They are down to earth, feet on the ground type people. I love 'em." Brake & Tyre Watch is a title but what brings life to that title are the people involved in the project. They are experts in their respective fields whose combined depth of knowledge makes this team one of the best in the world - Patrick O'Leary.

▲ Wabco's Johan van der Merwe explains how suzi hoses and their couplings work. He has been one of our expert trainers for years - and continues to be as passionate as he was on his first event.



▲ BPW Axles' Sean Annandale took a break for a while but is now back in full swing. He's an ace in the pits.

▼ 'Mother Trucker' Kathy Bell of Standard Bank and accident investigator supremo Craig Proctor-Parker, MD of Accident Specialist. Adding huge value all the way.





MiX TELEMATICS

▲ MiX Telematics puts its full support behind *Brake & Tyre Watch* in the interests of road safety and raising standards. Telematics plays a huge role in raising the bar in all aspects of transport operations.

Camaraderie!

▼ Veteran trainer and trailer expert Wolfgang Lehmann shares a light-hearted moment with *FleetWatch* Editor Patrick O’Leary. We’re not letting him even think of retiring. He too has been with us from our first event back in 2006.



IMPERIAL ROAD SAFETY

▲ Dumsani Khanyile and Zwelakhe Sibisi from Active Education are amazing guys with a passion for road safety that surpasses all expectations. They join us on all our events under the support banner of Imperial Logistics, which has been one of our partners for many years. *FleetWatch’s* event manager Kylie Saunders on the right just loves their passion and their willingness to go the extra mile in helping to make every event a success.

CAPTIVE



CAPTIVE

▲ ▶ Captive is an apt name for a partner from the insurance sector for the training never ceases to ‘capture’ the full attention of all traffic officers who attend. We also make sure all delegates are well fed and looked after throughout the two days. Below right is Captive’s Chris Smit who sees this as an extremely value added project in the overall effort to improve road safety in South Africa.

▼ *FleetWatch’s* Shudu Sibanda (left) helps ensure things run well while our very special and much loved accident victim survivor Nicole Melck, touches the hearts of all through her inspirational story.





ORAFOL SAFETY SYSTEMS



▲ Cynthia Bulekiwe and Clive Versfeld from Orafol Safety Systems at the Donkerhoek event. First time partners who made such a positive impact.



▲ Etienne Smit, GM of Orafol Safety Systems, wipes off the dirt to get a glimpse of the reflective tape. It's useless unless kept clean and visible.

New Partner

Welcome Orafol!

"We're not here for the numbers. We're here for the objectives." That response from Orafol's Cynthia Bulekiwe after I apologised to her for the low turnout of RTMS personnel at the first event in which they were participating as a new Brake & Tyre Watch partner, was a wow in my eyes. It's the right spirit for it ties in with our Power of One concept where if we can save just one life through what we all do, that makes it all worthwhile for that life could be yours. Welcome on board Orafol.

► Daimler Truck and Buses Southern Africa

Mercedes-Benz has been a long-time supporter of Brake & Tyre Watch and was with us once again in Cape Town providing this magnificent Actros 2645 truck tractor for us to show the cops what the components of a 'good' truck should look like and how they function. Thank you Mercedes-Benz.

ISUZU TRUCKS



Thanks to Isuzu Trucks

The Isuzu Trucks team was with us all the way at the Donkerhoek event with, from left above, Hanlie Du Preez, Jayesh Daya (ala 'Tiny') and Duncan Olds enthusiastically participating on both the theory and practical days. The feedback from them was so encouraging with all three saying how much it not only added value to the industry but also to their own knowledge banks. When 'Tiny' gave a talk to the cops (left), his question: "What is a truck?" solicited a wide range of innovative answers. A simple question but an important one in terms of positioning the trucking industry. So what's your answer? What is a truck?

THANKS TO MERCEDES-BENZ





▲ Dave Scott, *FleetWatch* technical correspondent, is a stalwart supporter having been us from the first event to this day. He always provides valuable insight to the cops.

▼ Jacques Coetzer from BPW Axles is a font of knowledge who gets down and dirty in the pits when he shows the cops the 'underside' of trucks – with some seeing that view for the first time.



TRITON EXPRESS – MOVING THE GOODS

Thanks Triton Express for moving our goods



Hats off to Triton Express who willingly deliver our goods to the various venues around the country where they have branches. The logistics of *Brake & Tyre Watch* have become quite a task and Triton Express helps ease the road for us. Here Athenkosi Gosa receives the goods from Kylie Saunders at the company's Cape Town branch. A big thanks Triton!



▲ The end of training quiz at the Cape Town event where each team selects one person to face the questions.

Knowledge is power!

The traffic officials trained on the Brake & Tyre Watch event...

One of the greatest thrills in training traffic officials is to see the transformation from them being initially sceptical when they arrive on the first day to being confidently empowered with new found knowledge when they leave after the second day. The saying 'knowledge is power' comes alive as a reality for it is the knowledge of 'things trucking' than enables these men and women to conduct their tasks in a professional manner. We give them no tools. Rather, we give them knowledge which they then use as their tools to identify unroadworthy trucks on the roads.

▲ Seated and receiving theory training on the first day. The low attendance from the RTMC did not dampen the enthusiasm of those who did attend.



Top cop wins!

▲ Craig Proctor Parker, MD of Accident Specialist, donates an accident investigation kit to the winner of the after-event quiz at the Cape Town event.



Look at the camera!

▲ Patrick O'Leary tries to get this winner to look at the camera as Standard Bank's Kathy Bell presents him with a prize.

Proud as punch

▼ When you see smiles like this, you know you've got to the heart. These two magnificent men specialise in cross border transport. "We've now got many answers we didn't have before," is what one told us. Yeah!

Getting under the truck

► Avid interest is shown when basics such as why a Manufacturer's Data plate is required by law to be affixed to the chassis and how it helps the cops to do their job.





Faults a' plenty



WATCH THE VIDEOS



Oil leaks

▲ Gemors! Oil leaks are a sure sign of maintenance neglect. This truck tractor had a host of faults which led to it being discontinued.



Load falling off

▲ The driver of this rig, which failed the tests and was served with a Discontinuation of Service Notice, had the unenviable task of realigning his dangerously leaning load of logs.



Showering under a truck's air tank. its supposed to be air coming out <https://youtu.be/Doz0W2mpdy8>



Missing brake caliper bolts lead to a host of problems <https://youtu.be/is7vMVQnk5s>



A host of faults make this rig total unroadworthy <https://youtu.be/Lk3bjnLWkMc>



A new way to start the engine <https://youtu.be/qJl8xiHRgKw>



Tied by wire

▲ Aside from the risk of these batteries dislodging on rough, bumpy roads, the loose bracket could fly off and smash into the windscreen of a car behind it. Shoddy workmanship and no pride.



Air suspension bag popped

▲ Bang go all the benefits of air suspension when the air bag pops and is left like this. The driver said it was from an accident. True but a host of other faults indicated wide-spread maintenance negligence. It failed.



Caging bolt in booster

▲ A caging bolt is used to unlock brakes which have bound. This operator just left it in the booster unlocking the brakes and therefore having no brakes in this drum.

Superstar

◀ There are a lot of good cops out there and Lebogang Mashabela is one of them. She operated the brake roller tester with absolute passion and skill. She is a Superstar.





Wheel nut loose

▲ Are wheel nuts important? Of course they are. After all, they stop the wheels from coming off and flying into other vehicles. Ask Wabco's Enoch Silcock who has personal experience of this. So why then do we find so many loose and missing wheel nuts on trucks?



ABS cables loose

▲ Disconnected ABS cables are commonly found on so many trucks. Why? Whether you like it or not, it is the law and a non-functioning ABS system on any trailer manufactured after February 14, 2004 results in a Discontinuation of Service notice. Note too the gap between the brake shoe and the drum on the right. Fail!



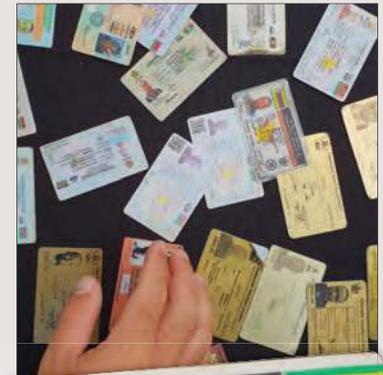
Dust cover off

▲ This broken dust cover from a brake drum was rattling around being held in place by one small bolt. This could fly into a car behind and lead to the death of your family. Small fault – HUGE consequence!



No brakes - a death trap

▲ Trucks need brakes to stop. How the heck are they going to do that when the brake shoe cannot make contact with the brake drum? AAARGH!!



Foreign licences

▲ Foreign driver licences are an area of grave confusion and concern for traffic officials. These were displayed by one of the cops in Cape Town to show the extent of the problem. Some are fraudulent while others have codes relating to their particular countries which do not match the codes of South Africa. This is an area that needs clarification if the cops are to identify licenses that meet the SADC protocols and those that don't. They do not have all the necessary information on hand when out on the roads.





NAMIBIA



Cross-border event

Brake & TyreWatch goes to Windhoek

▲ It was a happy group that completed the two day *Brake & Tyre Watch* training held in Namibia. Here the group of delegates celebrate their new found knowledge with our expert partners.

For the first time in the history of the *FleetWatch Brake & Tyre Watch* project, the team travelled cross border to Namibia followed an invitation from the Namibian Roads Authority for us to visit their country and empower their local traffic officials with knowledge on spotting signs of unroadworthy trucks. And what a success the two-day exercise proved to be with some 80 or so appreciative traffic officials attending the training in Windhoek. And the trucks were not too bad either writes *Patrick O'Leary*.

What are we taking on here?" I thought as we prepared for our first *Brake & Tyre Watch* training session to be staged in a neighbouring country. Would their legislation be the same as ours? And how would they accept a bunch of South African 'lorrie lovers' telling them how to do their jobs? And what would their level of skills be? We know that in South Africa, traffic

officials are sadly lacking in knowledge of trucks but would it be different in Namibia?

Well, the worry was totally unfounded. We were warmly welcomed by everyone and the training went off without a hitch. As for the relevance of our South Africa legislation to that of Namibia's, there are very few differences but just in case, I asked Craig Proctor-Parker, MD of Accident Specialist and one of our team member partners, to check it all out beforehand. The end result was that although some differences



NAMIBIA



▲ A Q&A session at the end of the training proved to be a lot of fun with the winner walking away with an accident investigation kit donated by Accident Specialist MD Craig Proctor-Parker.

do exist, we basically went on OEM specifications - which was just fine.

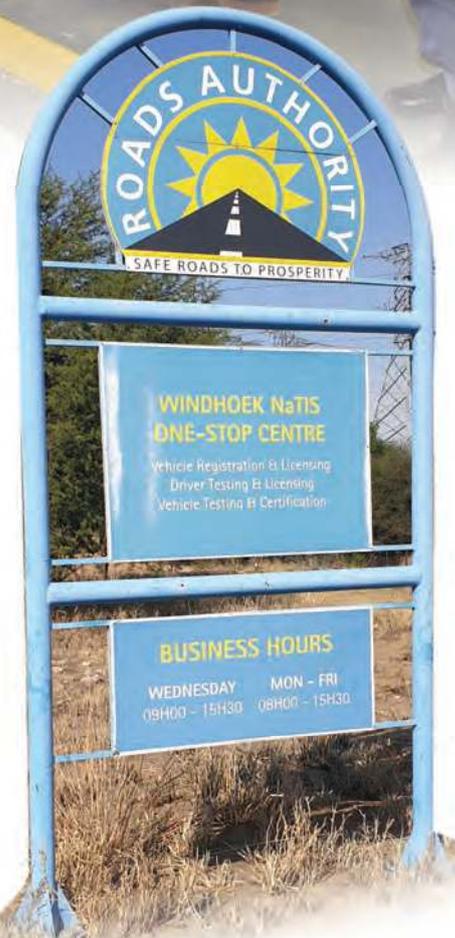
One of the differences we found most interesting is that a truck tractor with a heavy oil leak gets a Discontinuation of Service notice. In Namibia it's called a Notice of Suspension and is issued in terms of Regulation 163 of the Road Traffic and Transport Regulations 2001. Wow! How's that. You get taken off the road for oil leaks. Don't leave your mess on our roads. Yeah!

As for the condition of the seven trucks brought in on the second practical day for testing, we found a number of similar faults to what we find on rigs in South Africa. What did stand out was that operators up there pay better attention to the condition of their tyres as evidenced by not many tyre faults being found. They do, however, need to pay greater attention to their braking systems and other safety critical items for out of the seven

trucks tested, five failed due to serious faults.

One thing though is that we did not find any real, yuk 'truck dogs' as we often find in South Africa - you know, where there are no brake linings in the drums, or where the driver's steering column is being held together with duct tape - that sort of thing. That was encouraging and we urge the traffic authorities to implement the training they received to get their operators totally up to scratch. They are not far off the mark but there are some serious safety critical areas that need attention – and the quicker the better for there have been some horrendous truck crashes on Namibia's roads. We hope our efforts will eliminate such incidents. □

► Windhoek NaTIS One-stop centre... where we did the practical training.





NAMIBIA

Iveco brought in the 'good' truck

At every *Brake & Tyre Watch* event, we invite a different truck OEM to join us - not only to highlight to the cops the safety features of today's modern trucks but also to provide what we refer to as a 'good' truck to demonstrate to the cops what a roadworthy truck and trailer should be like. For the Namibian event, Iveco was our participating OEM partner and they really threw in all effort to make it a success. Not only did they provide an Iveco Trakker 440 demo truck tractor with a borrowed trailer for the practical test day but its local dealership, Africa Commercial Vehicles, also kindly provided the *FleetWatch* team with a luxury Iveco Daily bus to shuttle us around. Thank you Iveco, for all the effort you put into this event.



▲ Moving the team – the Iveco Daily bus certainly lived up to its name in terms of spacious luxury and comfort.



▼ Iveco's team from left: Thelma van Rensburg, Gunter Wilckens, Africa Commercial Vehicles and Desiree Greyling Iveco.





NAMIBIA



A full house for Training Day

One always gets a little anxious on the first day of training when waiting for the delegates to arrive for the 8.00am start. Will they all come? We've had it once in the past. It was last year when only 25 of the expected 60 or so members of the Road Traffic Management Corporation actually turned up. So much effort goes into these training projects with our partners throwing their full weight into each event. It is also very costly. So, as organisers, we do tend to get a bit anxious.

In Windhoek, however, come 8.00am and we had a full house with everyone in their places ready to begin. That's just one of the things that impressed us about the Namibian cops. They are disciplined and on time, everytime. Our local fellas could learn a lot from their Namibian counterparts.

From start to finish, the theory day was interactive and vibrant with our expert partners imparting valuable knowledge and fielding great questions from the cops. It was a day of true empowerment. ☐

▼ Trainers (l-r):

Craig Proctor-Parker, Accident Specialist with an attendee receiving his prize; Cynthia Bulekive from Orafol; Keith Smuts and Jacques Coetzer from BPW Axles.





NAMIBIA



Failed... 5 out of 7 inspected

It's only when you know what to look for that you will realise that what often looks good on the outside, is not that great on the inside – the inside in this case being underneath a truck tractor and trailer. It is here where many safety critical faults are found. With our expert trainers from our partner companies leading the cops and pointing out the positioning and functioning of various components, the teams were able to examine the

rigs in detail and were surprised at the number of faults found which led to five out of the seven trucks brought in for testing, failing. As an empowerment exercise, the project was a total success and *FleetWatch* has been asked to return with the *Brake & Tyre Watch* team to train even more cops from around Namibia. As Absai Thomas, Assistant Superintendent of the City Police, Windhoek said: The whole exercise was “an eye opener”.

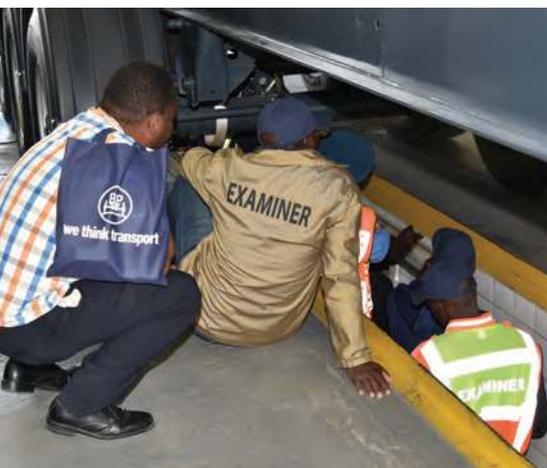


▲ Expert trainer Jacques Coetzer from BPW Axles points out the gap between the brake lining and drum on this axle which effectively means no braking. The rig was served with a Notice of Suspension.

Left-top-middle-bottom

◀ Tyre inspections led by Dries Venter of Bridgestone covered not only visible faults but also how to understand the different tyre markings on the sidewalls including where to find the tread depth indicators. It was then into the pit to check the underside of the rigs.

▶ The passionate Kathy Bell from Standard Bank, who we affectionately refer to as the ‘Mother Trucker’, with Richard Groenewald, vehicle examiner at the Windhoek Testing Station.





NAMIBIA



▲ For some of the cops, this was the first time they had been in a pit to inspect the underside of a trailer. BPW's Jacques Coetzer was there to show them the ropes.



▲ The large chunk in the sidewall of this tyre makes it dangerous and illegal. Take it off.



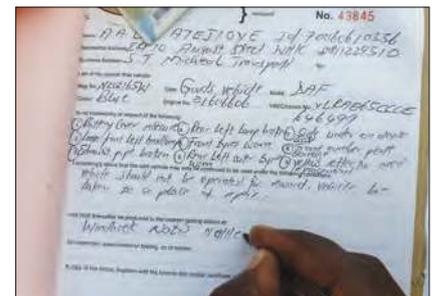
▲ And this is an example of what they saw in the pits. Note the gap between the brake lining and the brake drum. No brakes.



▲ A team waits for a rig to reach them for an outside inspection before heading to the pit.



▲ This is a total gemors and those in-line connections are illegal. The one had an audible air leak.

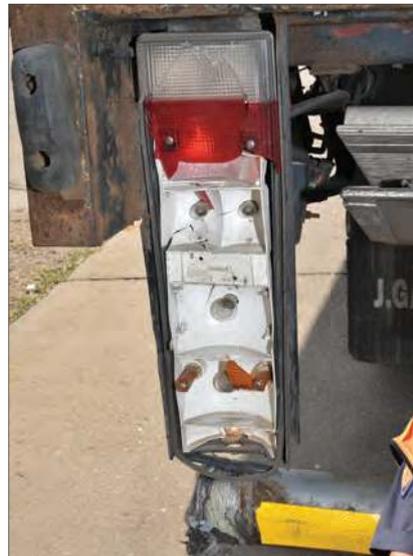


▲ One of the suspension notices issued on the day. This one took forever to write given the long list of faults found.



▲ Bridgestone's Dries Venter leads a team to the front of this rig to inspect the tyres on the truck tractor.

▶ A used DAF truck imported from Europe. It had many faults including the broken tail lights below. It failed.





NAMIBIA



About our partners

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Live coverage from Windhoek

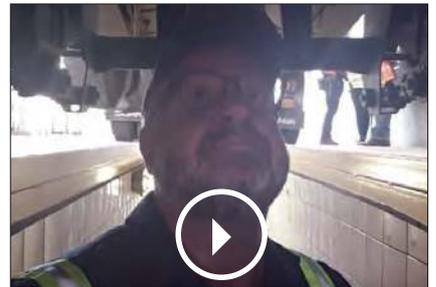


WATCH THE VIDEOS

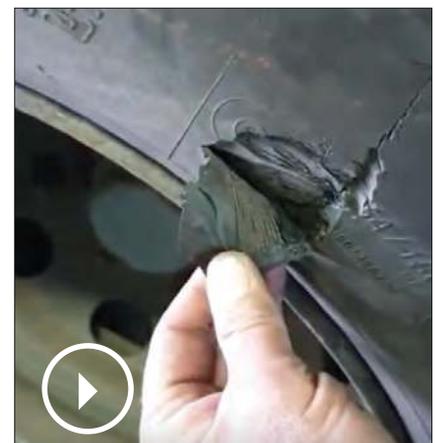


Windhoek traffic officials hail Brake & Tyre Watch training

https://web.facebook.com/OneAfricaTelevision/videos/2457762034247381/?_rdc=1&_rdr



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRZW-NjUxFw&t=144s>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4C4NyXRf16E&t=4s>