

Used tyres a challenge to increase road safety

Riaz Haffeejee, CEO of Sumitomo Tyres, was elected as the new chairperson of the South African Tyre Manufacturer Conference (SATMC) at their Annual General Meeting held in Johannesburg in November.



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He replaces managing director of Continental Tyres, Dieter Horni, who completed a two-year term.

"Tyre safety is a critical area for SATMC," says Haffeejee, explaining that they have already begun to prioritise driver safety on South African roads. "We have a role to play in ensuring South Africans arrive alive. We all want our roads to be safe and that means we need to do routine checks on our tyres, especially during the festive season when the roads are extremely busy."

Used tyres pose a challenge to SATMC's efforts in increasing road safety. "Used tyres are a huge concern," said Horni. "What we have seen in recent surveys is an alarming number of damaged tyres offered for sale to the public. These tyres are considered high risk for the user." SATMC investigations are in the pipeline in order to ensure all South African vehicles' tyres are safe.

Industry custodian

As the representative body of all four local tyre manufacturers, the SATMC aims to become the industry custodian, expert and regulatory and quality control envoy to ultimately advance the South African tyre manufacturing industry as a whole.

"We have come a long way in levelling the playing field in the industry," said Horni, reflecting on the tyre industry's recent successes and the key role it holds in manufacturing components for local original equipment (OE) vehicle manufacturers.

The SATMC has, with Horni's leadership, built working relationships with government, parastatal authorities and other automotive associations in a bid to raise awareness of the tyre industry and its role within the manufacturing sector. Meetings with The Departments of Trade and Industry (dti), Environmental Affairs, Public Enterprises as well as the National

Regulator of Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), South African Bureau of Standards (SABS), National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA), and International Trade Administration Commission (ITAC) have helped address challenges and put the tyre industry on the map.

The dti has played a supportive role, said Haffejee, in ensuring a fair trading environment for tyre manufacturers. "There are many common external challenges that we can drive and resolve as an SATMC body, to ensure a better future for the industry. Amongst these is the formula duty application through The dti and SARS for a fairer application of import duties, which should put a stop to under-invoicing of tyres through our ports." ITAC is also now restricting the importing of second-hand tyres limiting it to use for actual retreading purposes only.

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