

Modest increase in new vehicle sales

 By [Henrie Geyser](#)

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There was a modest 4.8% gain in the sales of cars and commercial vehicle sales in March this year when 56 110 units were sold compared to the 53 558 in March 2011.



New vehicle figures released by the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA) show 2552 more units sold in March this year, with new car sales registering relatively good gains. However, exports remained under pressure.

Out of the reported number of sales (which excludes Mercedes-Benz South Africa) 89.0% or 47 417 units represented dealer sales, 4.9% represented sales to government, 3.1% represented sales to the vehicle rental industry and 3.0% went to Industry corporate fleet sales.

The 38 970 new cars sold in March reflect an improvement of 3802 units or 10.8% over the same month last year. Car rental Industry sales, which have been particularly strong over recent months, only accounted for 3.8 % of total new car sales during March. However, sales in the first quarter of this year were the highest in five years.

Exports fall

Exports of South African produced motor vehicles, including MBSA export sales, fell more than 20% to a total of 23 956 - a decline of 6070 units on last year's figure of 30 026 vehicles. However, NAAMSA says export sales should improve during the months ahead as the Ford Global Compact Vehicle Export Programme and the BMW new 3 Series export volumes kick in.



Vehicle exports into Europe have eased due to the recession and debt crisis in the Eurozone, but higher export volumes to African countries were anticipated.

NAAMSA says that the outlook for 2012 in terms of total industry sales was one of modest, single digit growth and warns that sharp increases in energy and transport costs will impact negatively on consumer disposable income in the months ahead and high fuel prices should also reinforce the growing trend in favour of more fuel efficient vehicles.

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