

MerSETA backs SATMC tyre safety training

South African roads will soon be safer thanks to a financial boost from the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA).

The South African Tyre Manufacturers Conference (SATMC), representing all four South African Tyre Manufacturers - Bridgestone, Continental, Goodyear and Sumitomo - has received financial backing from merSETA to provide traffic officers and South African Revenue Services (SARS) Customs officials with tyre safety training.



The intention behind the training is to highlight the importance of tyre safety, especially the early detection of damaged tyres liable to cause devastating, even fatal accidents. The law enforcement officers who patrol national roads daily will now be much better equipped to educate road users on tyre safety and maintenance, ultimately yielding safer roads for all South Africans.

Completion of training provides officials with accreditation towards a formal, nationally-recognised qualification in line with the National Training Standards. "We focus on enhancing the knowledge of Traffic and Customs officials, ensuring a good understanding of current legal requirements when checking tyres on vehicles," says Nobuzwe Mangcu, SATMC Managing Executive. "The SATMC training is both classroom-based and experiential, enabling officials to undertake a technical examination of tyres with guidance from tyre experts. The value of this knowledge is understated in their examination of unroadworthy vehicles that pose a huge safety risk. The training ultimately contributes to reducing road accident rates on our roads," shares Mangcu.

MerSETA plays a pivotal role in meeting National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) goals, with the use of levies from the Department of Higher Education and Training. As a training facilitator bent on closing the national skills gap, MerSETA pays grants, registers moderators and assessors, identifies scarce skills, accredits service providers, monitors training quality and implements projects. MerSETA's mission is to increase access to relevant, high-quality skills development and training opportunities in order to reduce inequalities and unemployment and promote employability and economic participation. "MerSETA's role in facilitating the development of skills in the tyre sector in South Africa is critical," says Mangcu.

"Traffic officers can be a credible source of advice for motorists," Mangcu continues. "Tyres have developed tremendously in technological terms and traffic officers need to keep up with recent technological advancements of tyres, to ensure that their tyre knowledge is at the cutting edge."

"Tyres have to bear the entire weight of the car, passengers and cargo in addition to shock absorption, steering and braking," Mangcu adds. "Drivers must be made aware that driving with damaged tyres is incredibly dangerous and puts the lives of all road users at risk. As our training motto says, knowledge is power: talking about it is no longer enough, we are going out to empower traffic officials so they can raise driver awareness about these risks."

SATMC collectively hosted and trained 129 Municipal and Provincial traffic officials, South African Police Services (SAPS) officials and weighbridge inspectors at Mooi Plaza, Tugela Plaza, Harrismith and Heidelberg in April this year.

"Our partnership with MerSETA allows us to increase the reach of this valuable training and ensures accreditation and empowerment for the individuals attending the training. We appreciate MerSETA's support in this venture," says Mangcu.

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