

Figures show continued support for Ford Motor Company

More holidays in April provided an appearance of high vehicle sales in May of 7.4%, but the reality is that the new market has declined by 9.2% year-on-year. By way of contrast, Ford sales recorded continued growth, not least the 19.2% increase year-to-date on the first five months of 2013.



"The market is showing severe signs of pressure," said FMCSA's vice-president marketing, sales and service, Mark Kaufman. "Industry sales were significantly depressed, so little solace should be taken from May's apparent increase over April. Current consumer confidence is only marginally higher than the low levels experienced during the 2008 to 2009 global recession."

Yet Ford sales remain buoyant driven by sustained demand across its model line-up. EcoSport sold its highest volume and remained as segment leader for the third time this year. "Demand remains very strong for the compact SUV, so much so that our supply simply cannot keep up," said Kaufman.

Equally, its bigger brother, the Ford Kuga, sold its largest volume since August 2013 as the popular SUV continued to entice buyers with its combination of smart technology, features and performance.

Boosted confidence in the product

Ford's locally manufactured Ranger spent its second month this year selling more than 2,000 units. Its domestic success (2018 sales) was mirrored by Ford's export numbers, with 4,089 Rangers delivered outside of South African borders. "Our Silverton Assembly Plant is running efficiently and maximising production across two shifts," said Kaufman. "There is boosted confidence in the product, also aided by resurgence in the European market."

According to the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of South Africa (NAAMSA), passenger car sales accounted for 32,984 units, 11.3% down year-on-year. Light commercial vehicles (LCVs) performed marginally better, 5.1% down year-on-year to 13,866.

"There is no doubt the motor industry is facing challenges," said Kaufman. "Consumers are getting squeezed and product companies need to find ways to provide more value to these consumers. Ford's EcoBoost engine is one of the ways that

Ford has been doing well during the downturn by providing fun-to-drive vehicles that are also fuel efficient."

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