



Quarterly Newsletter for Friends of Golden Arrow Bus Services

# INTERCHANGE

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**Golden Arrow's Mission:**

To operate safe, reliable passenger transport services designed to meet the needs of our customers and by applying sound business principles, to create a secure future for the company and its people.

**Golden Arrow's Missie:**

Om veilige, betroubare passasiers-vervoerdienste te lewer, gerig op die behoeftes van ons klante en, deur gesonde sakebeginsels toe te pas, 'n seker toekoms vir die maatskappy en sy mense te skep.

**Umqophiso kaGolden Arrow:**

Ukufaka iinkonzo zothutho luka wonkewonke ezikhuselekileyo kunye nezithembekileyo kwaye nezilungiselelwe ukukhawulelana neemfuno zabakhweli bebhasi zalenkampani oku kufezekiswa ngokusebenzisa imithethosiseko yoshishino ephilileyo, nokwakha ikamva elikhuselekileyo lwalenkampani kunye nabantu bayo.

Nic Cronjé

CEO: Golden Arrow Bus Services

## NOTE *from* NIC



### THERE IS A PLACE FOR BOTH SYSTEMS

The lion's share of the Public Transport Budget appropriation in the 2015/16 Department of Transport Vote has been allocated to the Public Transport Network Grant (PTNG).

The purpose of this grant, which replaces the previously applicable public transport network operations grant and the public transport infrastructure grant, is to assist cities with funds to implement integrated public transit networks (IPTN) as set out in the National Land Transport Act (2009) and incorporated in the Public Transport Strategy.

The Public Transport Operating Grant (PTOG), on the other hand, is the allocation to the provinces for the subsidisation of conventional bus services rendered by way of interim, negotiated or tendered operational contracts.

The PTOG is, in terms of the 2015/2016 Budget Vote, 20% less than the PTNG. The impact of this is that cities will, in all likelihood, have to trade-off increased capital funding from the PTNG grant against the need to make greater contributions from their own funds to the operating costs of their networks.

The discretion to utilise grant funding for both operational and infrastructural purposes can, unfortunately, blur expenditure patterns. This is regrettable, particularly in relation to the operational expenses of the IRT systems which appear unable, within the current spatial frameworks of South African cities, to achieve the desired operational efficiencies.

An IRT system is ideally suited, and performs best, in an operating environment characterised by high spatial densities, short travelling distances and constant passenger flows throughout the day. Conventional bus services are, on the other hand, better suited to accommodate morning and afternoon peaks and relatively long-haul bus journeys. There is, undoubtedly, a role for both operating systems in the unfolding mega-city developments being witnessed

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# SABOA CONFERENCE 2015:

## Report Back

**T**he Southern African Bus Operators' Association (SABOA) was formed in 1980 by five leading South African companies (including Golden Arrow's predecessor City Tramways) to represent the interests of the industry at government level as well as among its stakeholders. The Association has grown from 174 members in 1996 to a current membership of 1120 operators and supplier members.

Every year SABOA hosts an annual national conference and exhibition, which gives members an opportunity to review and discuss matters such as broader public transport issues, legislative developments, road safety and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE). This year's conference was held in Pretoria and Golden Arrow featured prominently in the line-up.

Deputy Minister of Transport, Sindiswe Chikunga, delivered the keynote address which included a review of current public transport systems. According to Deputy Minister Chikunga the Department believes that the sector is at the beginning of a significant cycle of improvement, which is borne out by studies that have shown that South Africa is moving closer to the funding benchmark for public transport. Chikunga also reflected on the need for gender parity in the industry, rationalised public transport subsidies, a renewed commitment to road safety and he acknowledged the important contribution made by SABOA in providing essential transport services to South Africans.

Golden Arrow Bus Services

(GABS) B-BBEE and Sustainability Compliance Manager, Tanucia Coopasamy, chaired the B-BBEE session which included presentations regarding the Aligned Bus and Coach Sector BEE Charter as well as compliance monitoring of B-BBEE Sector Charters. Both of these are issues which will greatly affect the sector in years to come.

GABS General Manager, Francois Meyer, in his capacity as SABOA Operations Committee Chairperson chaired a session which included fascinating presentations about availability and price trends of fuel in the next 20 years and the lessons learnt in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) negotiations.

GABS Company Engineer, Roger Overton, in his position as Chairperson of the Technical Committee was also on hand to present Golden Arrow's recently rolled-out Online Maintenance System. The Maintenance system was developed by the Company's IT department in conjunction with Engineering to move from the cumbersome and unreliable paper job card system to one which has revolutionised how information is stored and accessed. GABS was thus able to fulfil one of SABOA's primary aims; that of collecting and disseminating information and know-how regarding the industry that may be of use and/or interest to the Association's members.

Transport expert, Professor Jackie Walters, summed up the most pressing issues facing the industry and also indicated what is being done by SABOA to address these issues. A major focus area in many of the presentations, including

Professor Walters' was the impact of the Division of Revenue Act on the Public Transport Operating Grant (see Note from Nic for another perspective on the funding issue). The introduction of the National Transport Forum, amendments to the National Land Transport Act and the Road Transport Act and the Integrated Transport B-BBEE Charter Council were also up for discussion.

During the CEO Forum which received contributions from GABS' Nic Cronjé, BUSCOR's Nora Fakude, South Coast's Terry Murugan and PUTCO's Thys Heyns certain concerns were raised that must be addressed as a matter of urgency. In terms of subsidisation, the lack of agreement between different spheres of government over who should take responsibility of bus contract funding requirements does not bode well should it continue to go unresolved. Heyns inter alia provided figures that put into perspective the unequal subsidy per passenger between traditional commuter bus services (R12.80), rail rapid transit (R26.96) and Cape Town's bus rapid transit (R46.75).

Tendered contracts being operated at a loss and the refusal by government to provide subsidy for additional kilometres will necessitate that SABOA's members continue to strategise and innovate not only at company level but at industry level too. In this regard the conference provided the perfect opportunity to highlight these challenges and to begin to collectively address them.

For access to presentations from the conference you can visit [http://www.saboa.co.za/conference\\_material.htm](http://www.saboa.co.za/conference_material.htm)

in South Africa. It would be extremely short-sighted to advance one system at the expense of the other.

This reality needs to be recognised, not only in the Comprehensive Integrated Transport Planning of the Metropoles, but also in the Treasury's budgetary allocations. The escalation formulae of the subsidy regime for conventional bus services has, for example, provided increases considerably below the consumer price index in the past number of years.

The time has arrived, after nearly four years of IRT operations, to review the performance of the system with a view to curtailing burgeoning costs and to assess the return on the capital employed in financial and material terms. The objective being the formulation of the most appropriate public transport solutions through the judicious deployment of road based public transport services as dictated by the realities of our physical and built environments. ☞

## New Dynamometer ideal for new generation engines



OLD HAND: Master Artisan, Barry Willoughby (left) has overseen Dynamometers at GABS since the 60s and passes on institutional knowledge to dyno shop supervisor, Jody Cupido (right).

**T**esting of engines that are overhauled after the completion of the mandatory kilometre threshold forms a critical part of preventative maintenance at Golden Arrow. The combined kilometres completed by the GABS fleet on a daily basis is equivalent to circumnavigating the globe 5 times and totals nearly 53 million kilometres over a 12-month period.

Engines are therefore removed and overhauled at 600 000 kilometre intervals to extend the lifecycle of the machine which in turn also prevents the costly consequences of repair and replacement in the event of a blowout. Before being returned to service, the overhauled engine has to be subjected to a stringent

diagnostic trial under real-time conditions to assess its operational fitness.

This is where the Dynamometers in the Multimech Rebuild Shop come to the fore as the final check before the engine is returned to active service. Dynamometers are used to measure the power and endurance of combustion engines. Motor and engine testing dynamometers apply braking or drag resistance to motor rotation and measure output torque at various speeds and power input levels.

The British engineer William Froude invented the water brake dynamometer in 1877 at the request of the British Admiralty to produce a machine capable of absorbing and measuring the power of large naval engines. The first dynamometers installed at Golden Arrow were Froudes and the Rebuild Shop still has four functioning models.

However, the latest acquisition is a new generation Indian - made Shenck D-400 Water Brake Dynamometer, with full electronic control. It is able to accommodate all types of internal combustion engines (apart from those that rotate anti-clockwise), various types of fuels and has proven to be proficient at steady state mapping procedures with an accuracy and tolerance of within 1% across its range. It is furthermore able to cope with engines up to 800 bhp. and 650 ft. lbs torque (880 NMs).

According to Divisional Engineer, Gideon Neethling, the new Dynamometer is ideally suited to perform comprehensive diagnostic testing on the new Euro model engines of the recapitalised bus fleet. "The Shenck Dynamometer is the perfect match for the testing of the electromechanically designed Euro class of engines and according to the manufacturers, it is virtually maintenance free. With its enhanced utility, Multimech will also be able to accommodate a variety of outside work orders and the R750k cost can be amortised over a relatively short period" Neethling noted. ☞



**STRONGER TIES:** Golden Arrow management and union representatives breaking down barriers through teamwork at a conference held in Tulbagh in February.

## Golden Arrow Management and Unions take time out together to strengthen relationships

**G**olden Arrow management and representatives from the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU), the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union (TOWU), the Motor Industry Staff Association (MISA) and the United Association of South Africa (UASA) recently gathered together for a weekend of fellowship and teambuilding in Tulbagh.

The purpose of the conference was to create a space outside of the working environment where those present could consolidate and improve interpersonal relations and reaffirm a shared commitment to the successful future of the Company. This was to be solidified by the drawing up of a social contract working document which could be used as a guideline for all future interaction.

The conference comprised a mix of structured team building exercises and workshop sessions facilitated by Nomfundo Walaza, a clinical psychologist with a visionary approach towards mediation and relationship building. At the outset Walaza had delegates define their expectations for the weekend and the responses gave an early indication that everyone was on the same page. Responses included a desire for active unity between all stakeholders, mutual cooperation, listening and understanding, common values, constructive

engagement and working together to ensure the Company's future success.

The first day's proceedings began with a check-in process at which every delegate stated their intentions and agreed to leave any preconceptions behind for the duration of the weekend. This was followed by a team-building exercise which really broke the ice and fostered a sense of unity of purpose for all delegates.

On Saturday the hard work began as delegates began to draw up what will essentially become a social contract between the Unions and Management. Each delegate was given the opportunity to air their views and this inclusivity created the type of environment necessary for frank, sincere engagement. According to Golden Arrow Chief Executive Officer, Nic Cronjé, any trepidation that delegates may have had before arriving in Tulbagh was quickly dispelled. "Golden Arrow is very fortunate because we have built a solid foundation with unions over the year; even so one can never tell how individuals will react when coming together on an occasion such as this. I was heartened to see that everyone was on the same page right from the beginning; we may have differing views at times but our goal is the same – to ensure that GABS future is secured," says Cronjé. 🤝

# Golden Arrow embarks on *exciting mentorship programme*



Golden Arrow has always valued and advocated education as a life-long process and the

combination of 75 line managers completing a General Management Learnership with the assistance of 17 senior manager mentors is a testament to this.

The line managers have embarked upon a 33-week journey towards obtaining the General Management NQF 4 certification. The curriculum comprises a combination of mathematical literacy, communication 1st and 2nd language, management skills, leadership skill and a generic management elective.

The qualification will focus on competencies in key areas such as organising resources, leading teams in order to achieve desired objectives, monitoring performance and compliance and making decisions using a code of ethics. Successful completion of the programme also serves as an access point to higher education and life-long learning.

According to Training and Development Manager Phumeza Nobhongoza, the company is hoping that all participants will use this opportunity to learn all they can from the programme and their mentors. "We know that this will be challenging in the midst of the demands of daily life but we also believe wholeheartedly that the benefits will be greater than the sacrifices in the participant's careers and individual personal growth.

Every participant will be assigned



SHARING KNOWLEDGE: Mentor Tanucia Coopasamy (left) consults with mentees Bradley Geduldt (middle) and Keith Patterson (right).

a mentor from senior management who will go through the learning process with the participant and acts as a sounding-board and personal development aide. The relationship between a mentor and mentee is not the same as a manager and employee relationship and has its own unique traits.

Area Manager Ivor De Mink is looking forward to paying it forward as a mentor. "I would not have been promoted through the ranks if it was not for mentors, albeit in an unofficial capacity who guided me along the way. I know exactly how the learners on the General Management Learnership feel so I will give them all the support I can," he explains.

TBRT Human Resources Manager Sunelle van Heerden has also benefited from mentoring: "When I was promoted to my current position, I was fortunate to be mentored by certain members of extended management. This mentorship and guidance has been absolutely invaluable and I am greatly appreciative of the time and effort they have spent on me. I feel that being a mentor offers me the opportunity to perhaps assist another employee in the same way that I

received assistance," she adds.

Nicolette Young has recently been appointed SBU manager at Arrowgate and will be participating in the programme; she is extremely excited about the prospects that the programme will offer her. I enjoy learning and feel honoured to be on this program. Being a new manager, I still have to learn a lot and this learnership will steer me in the right direction. I enjoy learning from others and was happy to learn that through this program we will be mentored by senior management which made me even more excited. I see mentoring as a personal development relationship between persons of different experience (knowledge) levels and I strongly believe that knowledge is power!" she says. ☞



## First female Small Business Unit Manager appointed

Golden Arrow first implemented the Small Business Unit (SBU) Manager system in 1992. The idea being that a collection of routes and the drivers associated therewith would be managed by a specific line manager whose responsibility it is to ensure that everything runs smoothly on his routes.

Although Golden Arrow has been making great strides in terms of gender equality in the work place and growing the female employee complement in a traditionally male-dominated industry; it has taken 22 years to introduce the first female SBU Manager.

Nicolette Young was appointed SBU Manager in January 2015. She

began her career at the Company as part of a Learnership in 2004, became a Duty Bus Driver in 2005 and was promoted to Driving Instructor in September 2007. Young is an accredited Training and Development Practitioner as well as a Qualified Assessor and Moderator. She is currently completing both a BComm in Transport and a General Management Learnership.

So far Young is enjoying the job and managing 165 drivers. "I really enjoy interacting with the drivers, mentoring and guiding them as well as learning more about different cultures; I am growing as a person," she says. Young also says that she appreciates the Company's equal



**BLAZING A TRAIL:** Nicolette Young is the first female Small Business Unit Manager since the creation of the post in 1992

opportunity approach: "GABS doesn't look at race or gender when it comes to promotions – they look at an individual's experience and qualifications but I do believe that now that I am an SBU it may inspire more women to apply for these positions".

## New Area Manager appointed at Philippi



**REARING TO GO:** Newly appointed Philippi Area Manager Siyabulela Ndyamara is looking forward to tackling the challenges associated with his portfolio

Siyabulela Ndyamara has been appointed as Area Manager at Philippi Depot. Ndyamara joined the Company in 2008 as Small Business Unit Manager based at Arrowgate,

before moving to the newly opened Southgate Depot where he has remained until his recent promotion. He holds a BComm Finance degree from the University of the Western Cape.

His key roles and responsibilities include ensuring that there is adequate manpower to meet peak demands, liaising with authorities with regards to infrastructure development within his area of operation and ensuring the Company meets its contractual obligations in terms of scheduled services.

Ndyamara is looking forward to the challenges associated with taking up a new position and moving to a

new depot. "Each depot has its own culture and having to adapt to that at Philippi will be quite interesting, the staff and passenger profile is also different to what I am accustomed to at Southgate. The Mitchells Plain area is quite vast and operationally is more complex than Khayelitsha. This is an opportunity for me to learn and grow outside what could be perceived as a comfort zone," he explains.

In five years' time Ndyamara would like to have consolidated himself in his new position and have proved himself as an indispensable member of GABS 'management structure.

## GABS' designed bus prototype hits the streets

Golden Arrow's Company Engineer Roger Overton has been hard at work designing a prototype bringing the latest technology and GABS's many years of experience together in a vehicle which would ideally suit the operational requirements of Golden Arrow and the Cape Town

environment. The RR9 is built and assembled by MAN South Africa and incorporates upgrades to the former RR8 prototype.

The RR9 prototype is still being road tested and is being driven only by 2014 Female National Driver of the Year Sharon Reagon. This

is done to enable Reagon and the GABS engineering team to compile extensive feedback on the prototype and compare it to the MAN HB2 which is Golden Arrow's current model of choice. Ten RR9's are scheduled for delivery by 2015 with another 10 on their way in 2016.



Photo credit: Gary van Dyk

# FIGHTING FIRE WITH FUNDING

**G**olden Arrow Bus Services (through the HCI Foundation) makes charitable contributions to a number of organisations and projects throughout our areas of operation. These projects are typically focused on education and early childhood development, health and welfare and social development.

For the 2014/2015 funding cycle the Company donated R10 000 towards the Western Cape Firefighters Association's (WCFA) Jaws of Life Vehicle Rescue and Extrication Courses held at Epping Fire & Rescue Training Academy. Golden Arrow's Head office is based in Epping and it seemed fitting to make some contribution towards the hard work being done by our neighbours.

According to WCFA Fundraiser Robin Fitzgerald, the funding was used to purchase Accident Damaged Vehicles for trainees to practice Jaws of Life and for evaluation at the end of a three to four week refresher course. "Fire and Rescue Personnel are first respondents on accident scenes nine times out

of ten and it is essential that our personnel are trained in all of the techniques of vehicle rescue extrication, which includes the use of the Jaws of Life and various other cutting procedures," he explains.

Statistics show that in 80 – 90% of call-outs victims are trapped inside wrecked vehicles. Airbags can inflate suddenly with disastrous consequences, side impact bars are built tough and therefore very difficult to cut and fuel lines need to be identified to avoid explosions. These vital skills are all taught in the Jaws of Life Training using car body shells with roof and doors intact for simulation purposes. Funding is used to purchase these body shells and training is being rolled out to approximately 1 200 Firefighters.

According to Golden Arrow Corporate Affairs Executive John Dammert, the Company recognises the valuable work being done through this training and was therefore happy to contribute. "Our Firefighters risk their lives on a daily basis in order to keep us safe; this donation serves as a small token of our appreciation for the outstanding work that is being done by the WCFA," he says. ☞