



Quarterly Newsletter for Friends of Golden Arrow Bus Services

INTERCHANGE

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**GABS
Gold Card
hits the streets**

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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 se 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.

REFLECTING ON THE STRIKE

Strike action does not only affect commuters and companies, it also affects employees' abilities to pay their bills and provide for their families. Research has shown that many employees find themselves having to make micro-loans which come with exorbitant interest expectations.

When the strike was called off on 14 May 2018, all workers whose employment conditions are governed by the South African Road Passenger Bargaining Council (SARPBAC) had lost 23 days of wages. As an example first year duty bus drivers would have lost R8067.33 for this period.

When one calculates the difference of the original potential increase of R147.32 per week to what has now been achieved at R189.41 per week, the advantage gained is R42.09 per week. When considering the R8067.33 the worker had to give up achieving this, a net gain will only be achieved in 192 weeks' time or almost four years into the future.

While there appears to have been many who were prepared to accept the wage proposal tabled by employers in the National Bargaining Forum, the absence of a legal requirement for trade unions to conduct a strike ballot denied such employees the opportunity to give weight to their own opinions regarding protracted strike action.

Wage negotiations are not easy and a balance must be found between labour's demands and industry's ability to meet these demands. The current operating environment for bus companies is far from ideal and many companies are finding themselves having to contemplate retrenchments or shutting their doors altogether.

Golden Arrow, in particular, is negatively impacted by the on-going trend of above-inflation across the board increases as we already pay up to 59% more than the minimum rate of pay for a number of job categories. This cannot be sustained over the long term.

If the industry is to survive and retain its ability to deliver safe and reliable services to millions of South Africans there will need to be a fundamental shift in the collective bargaining process as well as a more forward-thinking approach.

GABS Gold Card hits the streets

After more than two years of planning, Golden Arrow is now in the final stages of its conversion to a fully automated fare collection system. This comes after the cash component of the system was rolled out successfully across the entire fleet as well as the more recent phased introduction of the GABS Gold Card.

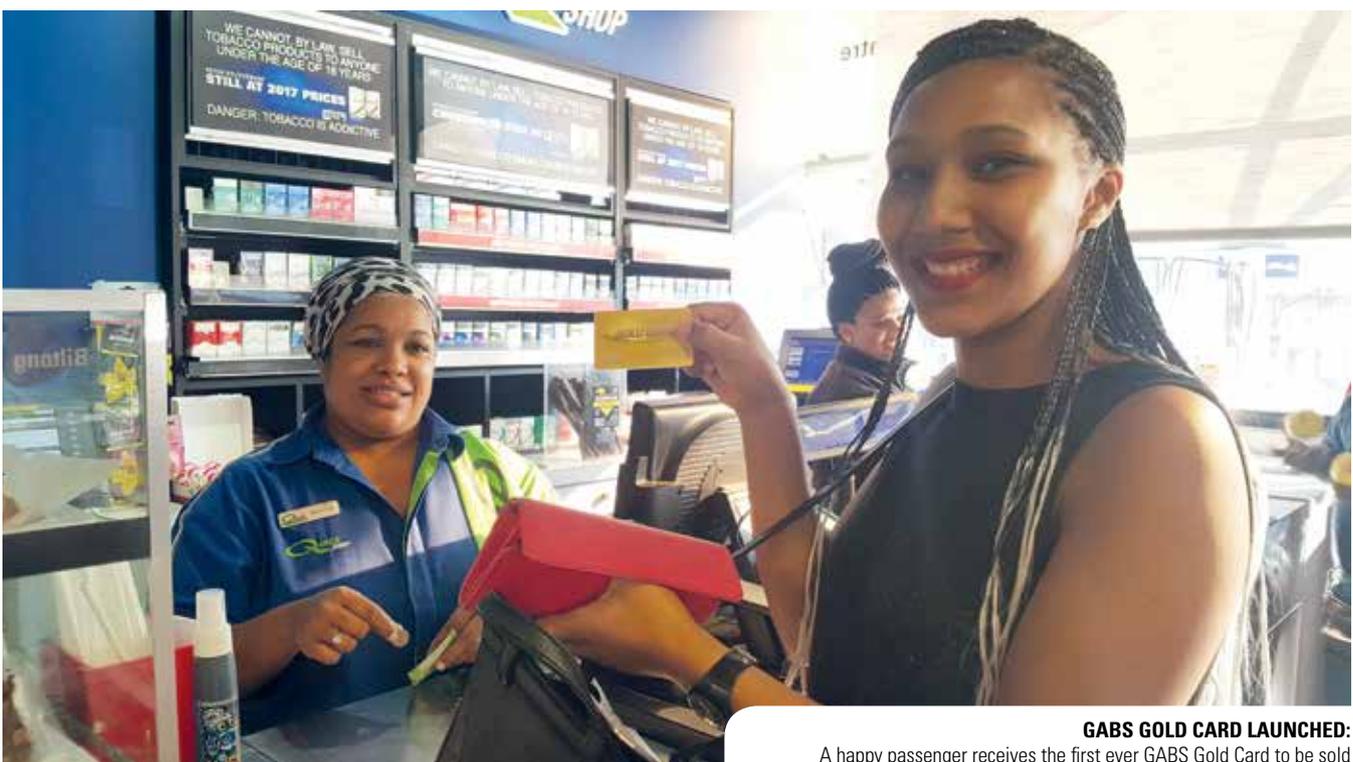
The GABS Gold Card is the smart card which will ultimately replace all paper multi-journey tickets (clipcards). The Gold Card uses contactless smart card technology and passengers are able to load up to three travel packages on each card.

The system mimics the current clipcard system in many ways but also incorporates international best practices. Route-based travel packages are loaded onto a smart card and rides will be deducted when tapping on. Golden Arrow's routes form an open system and passengers will therefore not be expected to tap out. Handheld verifiers will be used by inspectors to verify cards as an additional fare evasion counter-measure.

The new system has a number of advantages which includes improved flexibility, improved revenue accountability and security, reduced fare evasion, the ability to register cards, built in transfers and the generation of invaluable ridership data.

According to General Manager Derick Meyer, the introduction of the new system has been a team effort from operational, engineering and administrative staff. "The move from a simplistic paper based system to a fully automated GPS calibrated system has certainly posed a number of challenges. However, these challenges have been surmounted and we believe that the results will undoubtedly improve our operational efficiencies," he says.

Project Manager Mario Gaffley also believes that the two-year testing process has made it possible to ensure that the system is ideally suited to the specific needs of Golden Arrow's operations. "It was essential to us that we would ultimately provide our passengers with a system that is convenient and tailored to their needs," he says.



GABS GOLD CARD LAUNCHED:
A happy passenger receives the first ever GABS Gold Card to be sold

Driver of the Year 2017



ARROWGATE: Back row from left to right: Zwelakhe Mahonono (area manager), Berenice de Louw (female driver of the year/5th position), Velile Konqobe (sbu manager), James Swano (1st position), Benjamin Nyanyatsi (sbu manager), Vuyokazi Mketi (depot clerk), Lennon Maledu (sbu manager), Marcelino Booysen (7th position), Mawanda Lutya (10th position) and Mario Gaffley (operations manager). Front row from left to right: Derick Meyer (general manager), Nikolaas Fortuin (4th position), Chesrey Adams (admin manager) and Brandon Pieters (Rookie of the Year)

The 2017 Driver of the Year (DOTY) competition awards ceremony was held at the River Club on 07 April 2018.

The finalists had 166 years of combined service between them, with three of the finalists finding themselves in the top ten for the first time. Arrowgate driver James Swano clinched the top spot as well as the top manoeuvring score, top theory score and overall top score.

In addition to the top ten, Rookie of the Year is awarded to a driver who has had less than one year's service at the time of the competition and this year the award went to Brandon Pieters. The Female Driver of the Year was awarded to Berenice de Louw for her exceptional people skills, driving record and practical driving ability. De Louw also achieved the fifth position overall in the competition.

Tenth position: Mawande Lutya (Arrowgate); Ninth position: David

Johannes (Atlantis); Eighth position: Linda Siguca (Southgate); Seventh position: Marcelino Booysen (Arrowgate); Sixth position: Michael John Crozier (Atlantis); Fifth position: Berenice de Louw (Arrowgate); Fourth position: Nikolaas Fortuin (Arrowgate); Third position: Donovan Saayman (Philippi); Second position: Marco Losper (Southgate) and First position: James Swano (Arrowgate).

N2 Express and TBRT introduced their own competition in 2016 and the winners were also announced at this auspicious event. The 2017 winners were: Third: Lucien Strauss

(N2 Express/Eastgate); Second: Nazeem Hartnick (TBRT/Tollgate); First: Lulamile Rayi (TBRT/Tollgate).

According to Chief Executive Officer Francois Meyer, the Competition remains the highlight of Golden Arrow's calendar. "Celebrating the perseverance and skill of these accomplished drivers fills me with pride every year. Knowing that we have this calibre of driver behind the wheel of our buses means that we are able to consistently provide our passengers with safe and reliable transport, which is certainly worth celebrating," he says.



SOUTHGATE: From left to right: Derick Meyer (general manager), Alan Burgess (operations manager), Ivor de Mink (area manager), Marco Losper (2nd position), Linda Siguca (8th position), Keith Brickles (admin manager) and Mfundeli Ngomana (sbu manager).

End of a golden era for DOTY champion

Duty Bus Driver James Swano holds the prestigious honour of having won the most Driver of the Year Competitions in the Competition's history. We caught up with him on the eve of his retirement to find out what it takes to be a champion.

Can you take us through your employment history at GABS?

I started on 31 August 1974. At that time you were a bus driver, conductor or one man operator. I had the opportunity to be all three of them. Some days I would be only a bus driver, other days only a conductor and some days a one man operator. In 1986 the Driver of the Year Competition (DOTY) was introduced. This was started for the sole purpose to encourage bus drivers to improve their driving skills and to know that there will be incentives for achieving this by entering the Competition. I was privileged to win 12 competitions out of the 26 that I participated in.

Can you take us through some of the highs and lows of your career as a duty bus driver?

When I won the first DOTY competition and in 1993 I won GABS DOTY, Western Province DOTY and Western Cape DOTY. I also received my Springbok colours for coming second in the South African National DOTY in 1993. Currently, I am still the top candidate for Western Province and Western Cape DOTY. Every career will have its share of low points but because I always did my job to the best of my ability I was able to minimise these.

Do you remember participating in your first DOTY? What was it like?

It was very nerve wrecking and

I had to keep calm, but most importantly I enjoyed myself.

Was there a lot of pressure once you had gained a reputation for being a DOTY champion?

Yes, there was a lot of pressure because when it comes to the competition day, everybody wants to know who and where Mr Swano is. When I am on the track everybody is watching me. This was very nerve wrecking. Even though I tried to keep calm and I even looked calm from the outside, but I was boiling with nerves inside. What helped me a lot is that I made sure that each step on the track was executed perfectly, so that it added up to a big win. With that in mind I always aimed for the small win and each small win would eventually bring me the big win.

What message do you have for drivers in general?

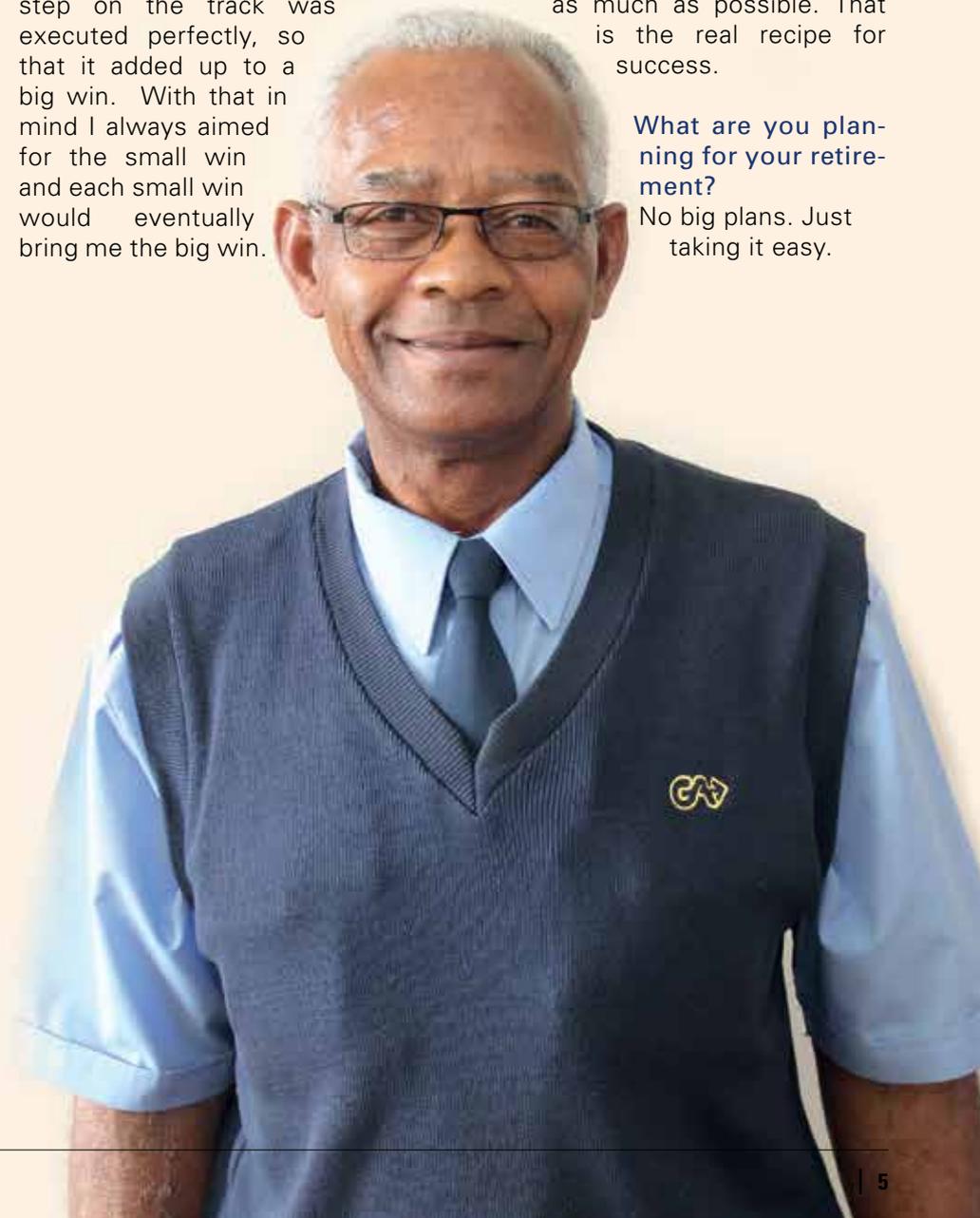
Keep in mind that driving safely and customer services are very important. Always be alert on the road. Try to practice the K53 to the best of your ability. I know it's impossible to adhere to all the K53 rules, but if you know it the rules will be able to assist you when in a pickle.

What message do you have for those drivers hoping to win DOTY?

If you are serious about the DOTY competition and you know what is required in the competition, then try to practice on your own and as much as possible. That is the real recipe for success.

What are you planning for your retirement?

No big plans. Just taking it easy.



Market inquiry into public passenger transport holds public hearings in Cape Town

In May 2017 the Competition Commission announced that it would be conducting a market inquiry into the land based public passenger transport sector. The modes included within the inquiry include minibus taxis, buses, localised taxis, metred taxis, app-based taxi services, Metrorail and the Gautrain.

The work of the Inquiry can be broadly divided into two areas; the first is the diagnosis of the most probable structural features impeding effective competition and thereafter to evaluate the most effective remedies to counteract the adverse findings from the diagnostic exercise. The inquiry's stated terms of reference noted the centrality of public transport in providing meaningful mobility for the majority of the population in their pursuit of economic participation.

The Commission has identified a number of areas of concern which include licencing and transport planning misalignment, route allocation, barriers to entry, disparate price regulation and price setting mechanisms, the allocation of operational subsidies, the implementation of Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks (IPTNs) and a possible lack of transformation in parts of the value chain in the public passenger transport industry, the implementation of Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) and its effects on the renewal of taxi operating licences, access to finance for taxi operators, access to infrastructure and terminal facilities, long term contracting between government and bus operators and commuter experiences.

For three days in June the Inquiry hosted public participation sessions in Cape Town. Presentations were made by the City of Cape Town, the Provincial Department of Transport, the Democratic Alliance, CODETA, Metrorail, Golden Arrow Bus Services (GABS), N2 Express and representatives from the metred taxi industry.

Golden Arrow's presentation provided a broad overview of its operations as well as insights into the complexities of running a scheduled passenger service. GABS was also in a unique position to compare its own operations with its experience as a Vehicle Operating Company (VOC) for MyCiTi as well as a Joint Venture Partner in the N2 Express Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha operations.

Important points which were highlighted included the difficulty of operating in an environment where the rail operator reports high levels of fare evasion on certain routes, which skews passenger travel patterns in the metropolitan area. In addition to this the minibus taxi industry is not constrained by set schedules or labour laws. GABS also shared the precariousness of operating on an interim contract, which provides no real measure of security for companies who have invested millions into their operations.

From the presentations and submissions it was clear that the land based public passenger transport sector is extremely complex and that although taxis, trains, buses and metred taxis all operate on land, they cannot simply be lumped together. Each mode has its own challenges and strengths and plays its own vital role in providing mobility solutions to South Africans.

The expected date for the conclusion of the Inquiry is May 2019.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE INQUIRY

- *Price setting mechanisms: the Inquiry analyses different price setting mechanisms and their impact on competition in the land based public passenger transport industry;*
 - *Price regulation: the Inquiry examines applicable price regulations and their impact on competition;*
 - *Route allocation, licencing and entry regulations: the inquiry assesses the impact of the regulations, including route allocation, licencing and entry requirements on intermodal and intramodal competition;*
 - *Allocation of operational subsidies: the Inquiry assesses the impact of operational subsidies granted to commuter buses, Metrorail and Gautrain on intermodal and intramodal competition;*
 - *Transport Planning: the Inquiry evaluates the impact of government's transport plans on dynamism, efficiency and competition in the land based public passenger transport industry;*
 - *Transformation of the sector: the Inquiry assesses transformation issues, including ownership patterns.*
- Taken from: <http://www.compcom.co.za/>*

Hosken Passenger Logistics and Rail Limited now listed on the JSE



TRIUMPHANT MOMENT: From left to right John Dammert, Derick Meyer, Debbie Vlahos, Francois Meyer, Mark Wilkin, Yunis Shaik and Gideon Neethling with the JSE kudu horn after the official listing of HPL&R.



On 24 April 2018, Hosken Passenger Logistics and Rail (HPL&R) was officially listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

According to Prejelin Naggan, head of Primary Markets at the JSE, the JSE is pleased to welcome Hosken Passenger Logistics and Rail Limited. "The listing will assist the Company in growing its business and

also provide investors with an opportunity to acquire a stake in the Company and contribute to its future success," he says.

Yunis Shaik, HPL&R Chairman echoed these sentiments. "The official listing was an exciting moment for HPL&R and I have no doubt that the Group will use this listing as an opportunity to make further inroads into the passenger transport and logistics industries," he says.

Golden Arrow secures level two B-BBEE status



Golden Arrow, as part of HCL's group B-BBEE certification process, has achieved a Level 2 B-BBEE status for the 2018 financial year.

Golden Arrow specifically contributed to this rating in two notable ways; skills development and preferential procurement.

In terms of skills development, Golden Arrow was able to bolster the rating through its newly constructed specialised Training and Recruitment Centre.

The Training and Recruitment Centre accommodates the Company's recruitment department and is responsible for promoting and developing skills and

competencies that are allied to the commuter bus industry (see page 8).

In addition to the Training and Recruitment Centre, the two major contributors to skills development were the Company's learnership and apprenticeship programmes, which are run on a continuous basis.

The second area of contribution, preferential procurement, is underpinned by an on-going process of identifying suitable B-BBEE suppliers.

Going forward Golden Arrow is committed to furthering its empowerment efforts through a range of innovative partnerships and socio-economic initiatives.

Custom built **Training and Recruitment Centre** opens doors



FIT FOR PURPOSE: Golden Arrow's training and recruitment will now take place at its state of the art Centre located in Philippi

After out-growing its previous location in Montana, Golden Arrow's purpose-built new Training and Recruitment Centre in Philippi has finally opened its doors. The Training and Recruitment Centre is located along one of Cape Town's major transport corridors making it easily accessible to learners and job seekers.

With the extension of training to the City of Cape Town for MyCiTi Operators and the need to have a continuous and reliable pipeline of suitably qualified drivers, GABS undertook the construction of a Centre which could accommodate the Company's recruitment department. The Centre is also poised to act as a hub for driving excellence, as well as promoting and developing skills and competencies that are allied to the commuter bus industry.

Over the last financial year GABS completed 16 840 training days equating to six days per employee. This is in line with the Company's focus on growing its own timber and creating a space in which each employee is able to develop to their full potential. This volume of internal training, combined with the growing demand for external training, provided the rationale for the building of the new Centre.

According to Human Resources and Corporate Affairs Executive John Dammert, the relocation of the Centre into a purpose-built location has been advantageous in a number of ways. "Being able to design this Centre from scratch means that we have been able to create a space which we believe is fully conducive for training and is also centrally located, which increases accessibility," he says. He adds that "the fact that it has been designed with sustainability in mind is really the cherry on top".

The Centre includes an array of green and sustainable features and components, which echo Golden Arrow's commitment to securing a sustainable future. These include; natural lighting to reduce power consumption, the use of rainwater harvesting for all flush mechanisms, a solar PV power and Tesla Powerwall battery to supplement the electrical supply and serve as emergency backup and security lighting, and special acoustic glass to mitigate the sounds of traffic and other environmental noise factors.

Training Manager Mashuda de Vries believes that the new Centre will elevate Golden Arrow's place as a training centre of choice. "GABS has a wealth of institutional and technical knowledge as a result of its 157 years in the public transport space; we are therefore uniquely placed to provide world-class training to the bus industry. The new Centre is the perfect space to develop not only our own talent but to extend this to the entire industry," she says.