

SA's trucking industry commits to driver safety and wellness at upcoming symposium

Minister of Transport, Sindisiwe Chikunga has announced the unveiling of The Department's programme for the inaugural Truck Driver Safety and Wellness Symposium. Hosted under the theme *Your wellness is our concern*, the symposium marks a pivotal moment in the pursuit of enhancing the safety and wellness of truck drivers across South Africa.



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The symposium will take place on 7 March at The Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre in Boksburg, Gauteng.

A first-of-its-kind symposium, which boasts an exciting speaker lineup, aims to go beyond just talking about truck driver wellness, but delving into the core of the issues. It serves as a concerted effort towards driving tangible change, elevating safety protocols, and improving the overall health of drivers. In collaboration with the SaferStops Association, the symposium is set to become an annual event on the industry calendar.

Commitment to action

"More than just an exchange of ideas, we aim to address actionable points and chase down partners to commit to change," explains Nicci Scott Anderson, founder of the SaferStops Association. "We want to look back on what we have achieved in a year and reflect on the success of private-public partnerships."

Hosting truck drivers from all provinces, fleet/human resources/risk managers, and delegates from key government departments, industry bodies, unions, state-owned entities and the private sector, the symposium has been designed as an interactive and informative experience, emphasising a holistic approach to driver wellness.

"The agenda has been carefully crafted with key industry stakeholders," says Mhlali Gqada, freight specialist at the DoT. "Our aim is not only to provide a comprehensive overview of the industry's current landscape, but also to chart a path towards progress, minimising risks for our drivers on the roads as much as possible, whilst improving their overall health and wellness."

Panel discussions and exhibitions

In addition to the main agenda, there will be several panel discussions covering topics such as skills development, driver wellness, truck driver safety on the road, as well as nutrition.

An interactive exhibition will also be hosted alongside the symposium. Drivers will be able to undergo complimentary medical assessments (optometry certificate, national medical certificate and complimentary spectacles), as well as testing for HIV, glucose levels, and diabetes. Head, neck, and shoulder massages will also be offered for those drivers seeking a moment to relax.

The latest electric trucks and other trucking technologies will also be on display. Virgin Active will run exercise activations throughout the day. Delegates will also be able to enjoy Engen's new, healthy meal options that are offered at its truck stop.

"We've received overwhelming support for the Symposium, with various sponsors on board," continues Scott Anderson. "This is an acknowledgement of the industry's commitment to improve driver safety and wellness."

The event, which includes a welcome gala dinner on 6 March and a dinner on 7 March, offers numerous networking and information sharing opportunities. "The symposium has been planned in such a way that it offers delegates not only information, but also an experience of what wellness means and what solutions are available," says Gqada. "It is important that we move towards an overall healthier lifestyle for drivers if we want tangible wellness results," she continues, pointing out the significance of practical solutions and promoting a healthier lifestyle within the driving community.

"The symposium is set to be the first of several initiatives to bring about change for truck drivers in South Africa. Our driver wellness is crucial to the trucking industry and the overall South African economy. Driving change and promoting wellness is the responsibility of all of us working together," concludes Gqada.

[Registration for truck drivers here.](#)

[Registration for operators here.](#)

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