

Volvo Group invests in driver learnership programme

Volvo Group Southern Africa has invested R1,9-million in advanced development and training of 20 unemployed commercial vehicle drivers.

In 2017, AB Volvo Group decided to donate funds on behalf of its employees to various markets around the world to assist in resolving the different challenges faced in local markets and to drive prosperity in these communities. 16 projects were selected by a committee of employee representatives from AB Volvo Board, members of the Executive Board and Martin Lundstedt, President and CEO of the Volvo Group.

The newly-established Volvo Group Driver Learnership programme in South Africa is the direct result of this initiative. Locally, the programme is supported by Volvo Group brands Volvo Trucks and UD Trucks, with product-specific training provided by the brands' highly-skilled driver trainers.

"We are very proud to be able to make a tangible contribution to the development of local transport industry. With an acute need for qualified and skilled drivers, we believe the programme will start



The first intake of drivers started their learnership in July 2018.

to address this industry-wide problem in a very practical yet impactful way," says Marcus Hörberg, vice-president of Volvo Group Southern Africa.

"Transport is key to economic growth in this region, and if we are able to upskill and empower commercial vehicle drivers, it will help drive development, prosperity and growth."

The first intake of drivers started their

learnership in July 2018, and after they have completed the 12-month learnership in June 2019, will graduate with a National Certificate in Professional Driving from the Commercial Transport Academy (CTA) in Bredell.

The qualification, which is approved by the Transport Education Training Authority, is based on both theoretical and practical modules. 🌟

Supplier capability ensures crossdocking success

While crossdocking provides many benefits over conventional warehousing, the success of this supply chain solution hinges mainly on the capacities and skills of the selected service provider. Quinton de Villiers, MD of Bridgewater Logistics, says that many businesses simply do not spend enough time assessing the relative risks associated with a specific supplier.

"It is critical that they also have a thorough understanding of the prerequisites for a successful crossdocking solution. I would, therefore, encourage any business interested in this solution to first visit the terminals of their potential suppliers to judge for themselves whether they have the capacity to deliver according to expectation," says De Villiers.

Firstly, a third-party logistics provider will have the necessary storage space to adequately deal with inventory, considering that crossdocking is intended to cut transport and logistics costs by eliminating the need for warehousing. They also achieve this ultimate objective by meticulously calculating the crossdock to eradicate the risk of congesting the system and damaging goods due to additional freight handling.

Importantly, he notes that the design

and management of the system also needs to be thoroughly scrutinised before appointing any service provider. "When it comes to crossdocking, the devil is definitely in the detail," notes De Villiers.

"Bridgewater Logistics has ploughed significant effort into developing its world-class crossdocking systems. In addition to time and planning, a sizeable investment was also required to design a solution that works effectively, which includes the ability to consistently deliver the correct product in its right amount on time," says De Villiers.

Other critical details that also should not be overlooked include the materials handling systems, such as in-motion labelling and weighing, label verification and destination scan, deployed inside the terminal. This is in addition to the methods used to minimise packaging costs and the capacity to screen products more efficiently to reduce the time parcels spend in shipment.

Bridgewater Logistics' customers continue to benefit from the lower transportation and distribution costs provided by its state-of-the-art crossdocking system. It has been designed to ensure that products destined for a similar end point



Quinton de Villiers, MD of Bridgewater Logistics.

can be transported together to ensure full loads for each trip, while a hub-and-spoke system optimises route planning to eliminate unnecessary processes, such as "pick-location" or "order picking".

This has driven down fuel and associated vehicle service costs, while products can also be delivered sooner to customers due to accelerated screening processes. 🌟