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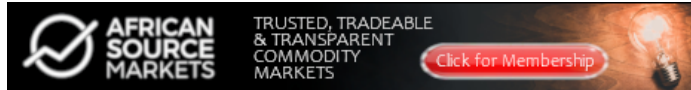
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High-capacity vehicles could be a cost-saver for Eskom

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State-owned entities, such as South Africa's Eskom, should consider using high-capacity vehicles to reduce overall capital costs, says Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) principal research engineer **Christopher de Saxe**.

A high-capacity vehicle is essentially a vehicle that carries more load than what is conventional for the country in which it operates in, and in South Africa, regulations permit vehicles up to 56 t, and 22 m in length – any vehicle that exceeds this would be considered a high-capacity vehicle.

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more load with fewer trucks” while simultaneously burning less fuel, thereby creating less emissions and resulting in fewer trucks on the road.

In South Africa’s case, in particular, De Saxe noted that it would also reduce road wear, a critical element for consideration as the nation has a road maintenance backlog.

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With this in mind, he referred to a performance-based standards (PBS) study being done by the CSIR, which looks to explore alternative public-private models for sharing the cost-saving benefit, including road wear impact savings.

The PBS pilot project is being formalised, he noted, adding that the study authors are hopeful that more coal transporters will participate in the pilot project, as entities – such as Eskom – stand to benefit from using high-capacity vehicles to transport coal, for example.

However, before introducing high-capacity vehicles to the road network, he stressed that it would need to “be done professionally and monitored properly”. ■■

EDITED BY: CHANEL DE BRUYN
CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

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