

New Black Entrant Logistics Company Creating A Niche Through Innovation With The Help Of Drones

Fuel hauler aims to 'pay it forward' after securing enterprise funding from Chevron South Africa

Cape Town: 22 April 2018: A new black-owned logistics company servicing the KZN and inland fuel depot route is being aided by some of the newest tech in logistics, as it goes toe to toe with big transport companies.

Using drones to create their niche in the complex business of fuel distribution, Crusade Logistics plans routes and monitors driver safety, providing customers with two-hourly updates on the estimated arrival time to the depots, ensuring that they are ready to receive the fuel.

Currently bridging fuel for Chevron South Africa and the Caltex Brand in Kwa-Zulu Natal, the 51% Black-owned and 30% Black female-owned fuel hauler recently secured Enterprise and Supplier Development (E&SD) funding from Chevron South Africa to expand its business. Chevron South Africa's E&SD programme is not only aimed at growing its base of capable and reliable partners, but also, improving opportunities for new Black-owned entrants to drive transformation through its value chain.

Crusade Logistics has received industry accolades for driver safety, fuel efficiency and reliability. "We mark out the routes first with drones to give drivers visual cues and familiar landmarks on an electronic journey plan. We have seen a marked improvement in driver safety and it also reduces the risk of trucks getting lost with a full load of fuel onboard," said Co-owner of Crusade Logistics, Wesley Naidoo.

"Start-up firms are held to the same exacting standards as more established suppliers and while there can be significant barriers to entry for new entrants, we are keen to enable their success by providing them with business opportunities within our fuel supply chain," said Chevron South Africa's Fleet Operations Manager, Noma Dumse.

"Chevron South Africa supports innovative and affordable funding mechanisms for the participation of black entrepreneurs in the fuel supply chain. E&SD funding is one of the best methods to allow for the development of black-owned small and medium enterprises and their increased participation in the mainstream economy," Dumse concluded.

Naidoo added, "The interest free E&SD funding and the fuel bridging contract with Chevron South Africa have boosted our cashflow and improved our access to additional credit, allowing us to expand our fleet from two to 14 trucks."

Chevron South Africa has identified a number of black-owned haulers which it is in the process of enrolling into its E&SD programme and bringing onstream. Other participants in the company's E&SD programme include black-owned small and medium enterprises as diverse as advertising agency, Avatar; operational equipment cleaning business, Galion Laundry and Caltex service station owners who have successfully grown their businesses as a result of the funding received.

Naidoo went on to say, "For us, one of the biggest benefits has been receiving mentorship from Chevron South Africa and integrating their best practice standards and culture into our business. We have been so inspired by how this programme has assisted us, that we are now helping other small black-owned businesses. In our own way, we are paying it forward."