

Sumitomo Rubber partners with 'Part Worn Africa'

Sumitomo Rubber South Africa (SRSA), manufacturer of the Dunlop, Sumitomo and Falken tyre brands, has taken up the mantle as continental custodian and steward of Part Worn Africa, a new pan-African consumer, tyre and road safety advocacy initiative.



Announced by the professional African public policy, regulatory and government relations advisory firm, ETHICORE, Part Worn Africa is dedicated to improving and promoting consumer protection, product safety, responsible trade and environmental management of part-worn and second-hand passenger tyres.

In 2017, SRSA embarked on the safety project – an initiative that is very close to the heart of CEO, Riaz Haffeejee, who believes that the safety of SRSA's customers is pivotal to the company's success as a business. With this in mind, the #SaferthanSafe concept was born, and is a vehicle that SRSA is using to lobby its strong concerns about safe tyres, and particularly that of part-worn and second-hand tyres in the South African and African markets.

Cost-effective alternatives is can be an option

Often this is a more cost-effective alternative to purchasing brand new tyres, especially for cash-strapped motor owners. However, what one may regard as a financial advantage, could cost them on the road.

SRSA CEO, Riaz Haffeejee, said, “The use of second-hand tyres, where the buyer has no knowledge of the tyre’s age or repair history – together with the illegal and highly dangerous practice of ‘re-grooving’ tyres to create greater tread depth – are a significant cause for concern within South Africa’s informal tyre sector.

“As an African corporate citizen, consumer and tyre safety, included in the tyre manufacturing process, is part of SRSA’s DNA and culture. We recognise the causes and consequences of unsafe and unregulated part-worn and second-hand tyres - firstly, for consumers and road users, and secondly, for SRSA as a regulatory compliant tyre manufacturer. Our custodianship and support of Part Worn Africa seeks to advance our already well-established manufacturing, product and consumer safety initiatives such as our ‘SaferthanSafe’ campaign.”

Haffeejee says that tackling the scourge of unregulated part-worn and second-hand passenger tyres is an industry imperative.

To date, tyre safety remains a topical and relevant subject in South Africa with statistics from the Road Traffic Management Corporation which state that vehicle factors contributed to 7.8% of all road fatalities.

Currently, in South Africa waste tyres are regulated by the Waste Tyre Regulations 2017 which repealed the 2009 Waste Tyre Regulations and form part of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008.

Commenting on the formation of Part Worn Africa, ETHICORE CEO, Abdul Waheed Patel said, “Part Worn Africa is set to fulfil a critical gap in working with key stakeholders to address the policy, legislative and regulatory deficits governing the proliferation of unsafe, ill-suited and illicit part-worn and second-tyres sold and fitted for use on public roads in Africa.” With consumer safety as a key priority on the SRSA’s corporate agenda, the company has now engaged Ethicore, and through Pan-Worn Africa will take its safety concerns forward.

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