

PEOPLE'S PRESS



THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR



Above: Steve Smith, Warehousing Director

INTERVIEW STEVE SMITH, WAREHOUSING DIRECTOR

Congratulations to Stephen Smith who celebrated his 30th anniversary at BPL on 19 June 2019.

What is your current role as Warehousing Director at BPL?

As Director for the Warehousing Division, I am responsible for 25 warehouses throughout South Africa with a staff complement of 1 200 people, including contract staff.

What do you love most about your job?

Working with the people. The success of the Warehouse Division depends on how committed the staff are in performing their respective tasks. I also love being on the operational side where the cut and thrust of the business is. My background in HR and Industrial Psychology has equipped me with the skills to manage people.

The hardest aspect is trying to get people to be passionate about what they do. My motto is Purpose, Pride and Passion. If you have these, you will be great at your job. I try to inspire people to care about what they do and not to see it as just a 9 to 5 job.

I am still passionate about my job 30 years later.

I am incredibly blessed to have a fantastic Warehouse Management team behind me. My EXCO are very good at what they do. They support me 110%. They are passionate, positive people who I can trust and rely on.

Tell us about your background and career path.

I grew up in Durbanville, Cape Town, and after matric I completed a Bachelor of Social Science Degree at Rhodes University. I then spent two years in military service based at Voortrekkerhoogte in Pretoria where I was commissioned as an Officer.

On returning to Cape Town at the end of 1985, I went to work for a short-term insurance broker for one year. I was marking time while trying to get into the job market with the plan to go into Human Resource Management. I applied for a job with Rand Mines and was appointed as an HR Officer at Duvha Opencast Services, which was a coal mine in Witbank.

In June 1989 I left to join a textile company called Veldspun, in Port Elizabeth, which

was part of the Romatex Group. After two years I was promoted from senior HR Officer to join Island View Storage, now called Bidvest Tank Terminals, as HR Manager, based in Durban, also part of Romatex. During my time there I was appointed as a Director and in October 1999 Island View Storage was acquired by Bidvest.

In November 2001 I moved to Bidvest-owned Rennie's Cargo Terminals as HR Director. Rennie's Cargo Terminals was divided into two separate companies, Bidvest Port Operations and Rennie's Distribution Services. I was a Director on both boards for about a year, after which I left the BPO Board and remained on the Rennie's Distribution Services board.

While at RDS I was keen to be more involved in operations and after an opportunity arose I was appointed as Operations Director. This is what led me to becoming Warehousing Director when Rennie's Distribution Services merged with Safcor Panalpina, which then became Bidvest Panalpina Logistics in December 2011.

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Interview Steve Smith, continued from page 1

What advice do you have for youngsters entering the logistics industry?

I have always been a very positive person and I try to take a positive view on life even when times are tough. My advice is that people must seek the positive side to any situation because a positive attitude is what gets you to wherever you want to be ultimately. People won't want to work with you if you have a negative attitude.

As a new entrant to the job market you must be willing to work beyond your Job Description. This will enable you to know more than the next guy or girl, which will make you attractive to promote. The more you know, the more valuable you will be to the organisation.

At BPL we encourage promotion through the ranks. We have graduate programmes for youngsters with logistics degrees to develop them for future management. In our game succession planning is everything as there is a skills shortage.

How does the future look for you?

At 55 years of age I have a good few years to go before calling it a day. There is constant change in our industry and always new challenges to face which keep us young. The economy at the moment is a challenge and our clients are under pressure. We have to work with them to ensure that they succeed as their success is our success.

We have some large warehouses throughout South Africa. Our newest addition to the family is our Runway Park Facility which boasts 23 000 m² of warehouse space. Runway Park has been purpose built to specifically handle chemicals as well as general cargo. We have had our challenges insofar as filling the warehouse with the ideal type of cargo at the best rates, especially in our current economic climate.

But as a state of the art warehouse which is 100% compliant in terms of the chemicals we handle, we attract overseas clients who are very particular about where they store their chemical products. They do not want to be linked to anything that is non-compliant and we are very strict with our compliance and proper training of staff.

In my view, the future of the Warehousing Division is good. We are well positioned to take advantage of the economic upswing,

which will happen. In the meantime, we are gearing up with some new warehouse technology as well as looking at innovative warehouse practices specifically around the manipulation of big data. This is the real fun stuff for the younger generation.

What are your passions?

My family is very important to me. My daughter is a Psychologist and she lives in Cape Town. She has a 3-year old daughter and she has just added a baby daughter to the fold. I am really enjoying being a Grandpa and I try to see my Cape Town family as often as possible.

I have several passionate interests which I share with my wife, namely travel, skiing in the Alps and wine tasting. I enjoy going to gym and keeping fit. I love sport and any opportunity to watch sport.

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MEET TEAM SEBENZA IN SPARTAN



L-R seated: Martie Scharneck, Airfreight Controller; Vusi Jingizane, Senior Customs Liaising Officer; Salome Mhlanga, Operations Controller and Linah Gololo, Operations Supervisor.

L-R standing: William Mojape, Operations Manager; Rachele Motsepe, learner; Nokukhanya Mazibuko, receptionist/operations learner and Mpolokeng Sibiya, Export Controller.

Located in a quiet corner of Spartan is this busy little branch of Sebenza that serves as its head office, a small family of colleagues whose average length of service ranges from 10 to 22 years. Operations Manager William Mojapelo glows with pride when he talks of Sebenza's achievements and those of his own journey.

"As a small operation we have achieved a lot," says William. "Sebenza started trading in 1997 as the first Black Economic Empowerment logistics company in South Africa. I was head-hunted by the then Group Operations Director to join the company. What attracted me was the idea of empowering not only employees but suppliers too. This is what Sebenza has achieved with great success and continues to do.

"Having taken up more than 100 learnerships through various Government initiatives with the support of TETA / SAQA, most of our learners have become industry specialists and some who were absorbed into the company are now our best performers. This makes one feel fulfilled.

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William Mojapelo, Operations Manager, Sebenza Spartan.

"Another reason for job fulfilment for me has always been the diverse portfolios we manage, giving us exposure to a wide range of industries."

William grew up in the rural dusty former homeland of Lebowa, now Limpopo. After completing matric in 1987 and with no job opportunities in the homeland he set off for Johannesburg. After a six-month enrolment at Siding Tech College, followed by three months with the South African Police Force as a recruit, William went to the job market.

Luck was on his side when he met a British family who owned a computer company

called Clearways Computer Systems. They were the first competitors to Compuclearing in the sale of freight software. "That is where I was introduced to the clearing and forwarding industry, hired as support systems for freight.

"They were great mentors and, because they were trying to empower me, they encouraged me to look for a career in freight. They introduced me to one of their customers, Union Transport (now UTI), who hired me in 1989. Union Transport was the first agent for UPS in South Africa and I was tasked to take care of their account as an agent for UPS," William explains.

William then had to leave Union Transport to manage various companies that held the UPS agency until they became fully fledged independent operations. William spent a good 13 years in various roles, becoming its first Black Brokerage Manager.

"Joining Sebenza was almost like coming back home, it has been a fulfilling career," he says. "Working in shipping feels like having travelled the world over and I cannot change it for any other career, as we always say 'act local but think global', which is the key to understanding risks and opportunities in the movement of goods and services around the globe," he explains.

During his career in freight Forwarding at UPS, William obtained a Management Development Programme (MDP) in 2002/2003 from Manchester Business School, sponsored by Unitrans Express Delivery, a company that once held the UPS licence in South Africa.

William's greatest hobby is current affairs, both local and international, a passion developed while trying to navigate routes for clients' cargoes. "You need to understand the political climate of the freight industry," he says.

"With the BPL alliance we must now focus on our synergies and integrate our businesses' processes. BPL has resources which Sebenza will benefit a great deal from," says William. "Many South African companies are now Level 1 B-BBEE so we need to find a new sales point as we cannot continue on the same trajectory. Investing in a 5-10 year strategy that is not going to be relevant in 10 years can be detrimental."

William has been married for 24 years. His wife is a school teacher and his three adult daughters all have qualifications, two as accountants (one is a CA) and the third with honours in Business Development and Planning.



Office attendants: Mimi Ngwenya (left) and Jacqueline Masoga with William Mojapelo.



Accounts team L-R: Mathabathe Chueu, Accounts Payable Foreign Creditors and Dineo Mohoase, Finance Learner.



Drivers L-R: Joe Dikutla, Transport Team Leader; Lucky Sekwati, Warehouse Supervisor; Simon Mekoa, Driver and Freddie Magatsela, Driver.



Left: Simphiwe Njobe, Receiving Clerk and Charles Mashego, Warehouse Attendant.

CLIENT CORNER



BPL MOVES AMS BUSINESS TO UNIT 1

October 2018 marked the start of a new journey for BPL client TTAF Automotive Parts when it became a separate legal entity known as Africa Mobility Solutions, under the Toyota Tsusho Group Company umbrella.

Explains Christa Nel, Key Account Manager, "BPL has been running TTAF's parts warehouse at Wrench Road for many years. Under the new structure, AMS plans to make SA the hub for the rest of Africa and is forming joint ventures with other OEMs. This meant our Wrench Road facility could not accommodate the increased growth in business."

After many discussions with BPL management and with assistance from Maria, Currie, Willem, Ezelda and Ishan, Unit 1 was the suggested warehousing solution and AMS shareholders were consulted. In June a delegation from Japan visited the old and new warehouses and the go-ahead was received. SARS Customs was informed of the re-location and approval was received from SARS on Friday 23 June. The move began the next day.

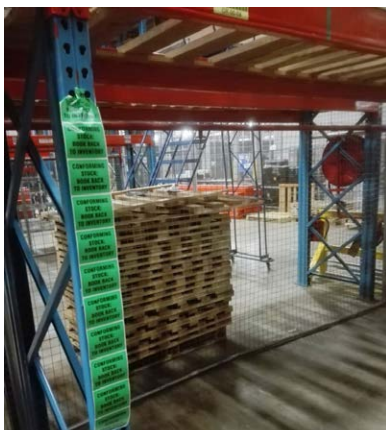
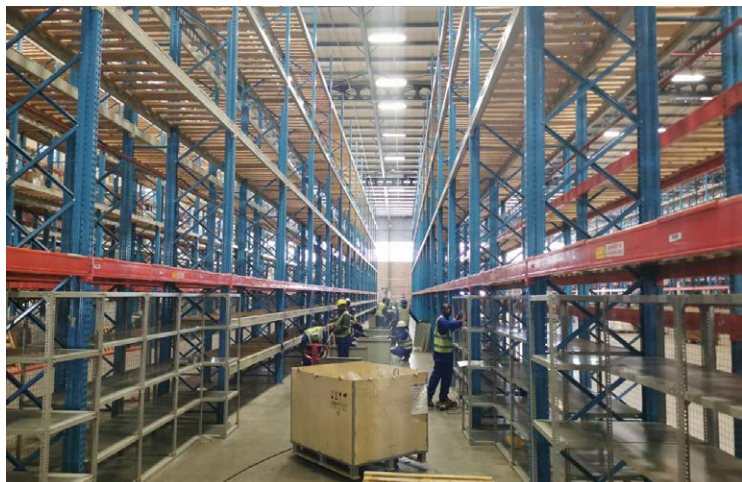
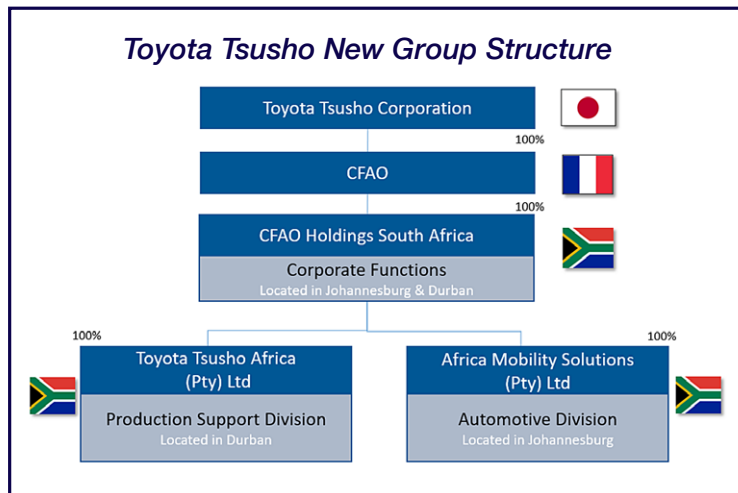
Thirty-six curtain side super link loads were used to move the cargo across while 28 staff members were involved in the move, of which 19 loads were on the Saturday and Sunday.

Not only did the parts move across, racks had to be adjusted, the crating equipment had to be set up, network points installed, equipment moved over, the scale and dimensioning equipment had to be moved over and installed and a whole lot more.

All of this took careful planning by all and Ezelda, Gerhard, Ivan, Christopher and their team did a splendid job. Even Ezelda was pushing trolleys! Morne and Raj assisted from the IT side in conjunction with the AMS IT team, Marijke, Jacques, John and Clifford.

Despite a very challenging set up plan that had to be executed at very short notice, the move was a great success and AMS can now look forward to growing their business further in partnership with BPL.

Well done and thanks to all who were involved.



THE TRAVELLING ART GALLERY 2019

BPL's commitment to assisting The Travelling Art Gallery with shipments of art to Germany ensured another successful showing of South African art in June and July 2019.

"We all know that art reflects cultural values, identity and beliefs and that art is a mirror of society in all countries around the world," says Barbara Lenhard who, together with her partner Florian, conceptualised the idea of showing South African art to the world in January 2018.

"Travelling with the art of 16 South African artists for 50 days and showing this art for 10 days each in major cities such as Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Munich was magic. From its beginning the exhibitions have had over 10 000 visitors. It is a great success story," she says.

"Thank you to all our sponsors including BPL for contributing to this success."



BPL RETURNS RIAAN MANSER BOAT



South African rowing icon Riaan Manser and his Soweto-based rookie rower Fanafikile "Fana" Lehakha have now paddled more than 1 000 nautical miles in their epic rowing odyssey to cross the Atlantic Ocean from South Africa to Barbados.

When the time came to return his boat, the Odyssey, to Cape Town, BPL stepped in to take over the logistics. Having previously assisted Riaan to move the Odyssey from Los Angeles to Las Palmas, BPL's Projects division aided by Cape Town operations arranged for this unusual cargo to be shipped to South Africa.

Transit time took nearly 60 days and, on arrival in Cape Town, the shipment was customs cleared by BPL, unpacked by a specialist rigging team and delivered to Riaan's home. Well done BPL Projects and Cape Town.

SAAFF GOLF DAY

The annual SAAFF golf day was held on a bright sunny day at the Benoni Country Club on 22 August 2019. BPL hosted the tee box at the ninth hole and had a fun-filled carnival theme, much to the delight of the golfers. The annual event is in aid of raising funds for the San Michele charity. This year was a huge success, thanks to both the golfers and the sponsors. The day would not be a success without the continued support of all the parties who participate.

If you are a serious golfer and need absolute silence to tee off, this is not the day for you. This year even the peacocks had near misses with the little round white projectiles coming off the tees in every direction. I am pretty certain the golfers lost every golf ball they owned on the day. However, it was festive and a huge success with BPL sharing the prize for the best hole!



L-R: Claudia Zolnierczyk, Marvin Pillay, Fortunate Mboweni and Themba Khumalo.



L-R: Lee Schoeman, Patrick Leger, Ettienne de Jager and Mark Diab.



L-R: Reiny Paul, Berto van der Lith, Adriaan Erasmus and Marius Geyer.

BIDVEST 7TH ANNUAL LADIES CHARITY TEA PE

The Bidvest Ladies tea in PE was held on 16 August with this year's theme being Black and White with any colour mask. It was well supported by our Bidvest sister companies together with their prestigious clients. We donated R12 000 to our chosen charity this year, the PE Rape Crisis Centre. Everyone had so much fun with good entertainment, self-defence demonstration and motivational speaking. We all wear masks – behind every mask there is a face and behind that a story...



Handover of cheque to charity with all the Bidvest group companies' representatives.



BPL ladies Front L-R: Zjaneen Mattheus and Eleanore Eades. Back L-R: Maxine Brockman, Yolande Hackney and Ursula Sauls.



L-R: Client Bodo Moller with BPL's Yolande Hackney and Danelle du Preez.



Table decor

SAAFF ANNUAL FUN QUIZ

The 16th annual fun quiz was held on 2 Aug 2019 at the Italian Club in Cape Town.



Enjoying the event L-R: Sonwabo Nabanti, Bulumko Xoli, Kauthar Salie, Nasha Harris, Gorete Henriques, Lee Mallee, Cassandra du Toit and Andrea Ellis-Bester.