

PRESS RELEASE

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naamsa RELEASES JULY 2026 NEW VEHICLE SALES STATS

DOMESTIC VEHICLE MARKET MAINTAINS RESILIENCE AS CONSUMER DEMAND AND NEW ENERGY VEHICLE ADOPTION STRENGTHEN

PRETORIA: Monday, August 03, 2026: South Africa's new vehicle market entered the second half of 2026 on a resilient footing, supported by substantial fuel price reductions in July that provided much-needed relief to motorists and businesses. The lower fuel costs helped offset the impact of the full reinstatement of the General Fuel Levy, easing pressure on household and operating budgets and contributing to a more supportive environment for vehicle demand. Against a backdrop of persistent economic headwinds, the market demonstrated steady underlying momentum as the industry commenced the third quarter on a positive note.

Aggregate domestic new vehicle sales in July 2026 reached 57,708 units, representing an increase of 6,150 units, or 11,9%, compared to the 51,558 vehicles sold in July 2025. In contrast, export volumes reached 32,801 units, a decrease of 11,6% relative to the 37,114 units shipped in July 2025.

Overall, out of the total reported industry sales of 57,708 vehicles, an estimated 48,949 units, or 84,8%, represented dealer sales, an estimated 11,2% represented sales to the vehicle rental industry, 2,2% to government sales, and 1,8% to industry corporate fleets.

The July 2026 new passenger car market at 40,912 units, reflected the best monthly passenger figures since September 2014, with an increase of 4,558 units, or 12,5%, compared to the 36,354 new cars sold in July 2025. Car rental sales accounted for a sound 13,8% of new passenger vehicles sold during the month. Domestic sales of new light commercial vehicles (bakkies and mini-buses) at 13,710 units during July 2026 recorded an increase of 1,309 units, or 10,6% compared to the 12,401 units sold in July 2025.

Sales in the medium and heavy commercial vehicle segments performed well during July 2026 with medium commercial vehicles reflecting an increase of 137 units, or 19,4% to 843 units in July 2026 compared to the 706 units sold in July 2025, the strongest month of Medium Commercial sales since March 2023; while heavy trucks and buses at 2,243 units in July 2026 reflected an increase of 146 units, or 7,0% compared to the 2,097 units sold in July 2025. Exports remained under pressure in July 2026, with vehicle export sales reaching 32,801 units, down by 4,313 units, or 11,6%, compared to the 37,114 units exported in the corresponding month last year.

NEW ENERGY VEHICLE (NEV) ADOPTION CONTINUES TO ACCELERATE IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's transition towards electrified mobility continued to gain momentum during June 2026, with 3,045 NEVs sold, representing a 104.2% increase compared to the 1,491 units recorded during the corresponding period in 2025. Based on total domestic new light vehicle sales of 51,508 units, NEVs achieved a market penetration rate of 6%, meaning that approximately one in every seventeen new vehicles sold in South Africa is now electrified.

The market continues to be led by Traditional Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs), which accounted for 1,488 units, representing 48.9% of all NEV sales. Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) recorded 990 units, contributing 32.5% of the NEV market, while Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) reached 419 units, accounting for 13.8% of total NEV sales. Electrified commercial vehicles, including light and medium commercial applications, continued to emerge as an important niche, highlighting the gradual diversification of electrified mobility beyond the passenger vehicle segment.

On a year-to-date basis, South Africa has recorded 13,193 NEV sales, comprising 6,667 HEVs, 4,623 PHEVs and 1,903 BEVs. The sustained growth across all three technology categories demonstrates that consumers are increasingly embracing electrified vehicles, supported by a broader range of product offerings and growing awareness of alternative propulsion technologies.

The current market composition also provides important insight into South Africa's electrification trajectory. Rather than a rapid transition to battery-electric vehicles, the domestic market is following a technology-diverse pathway, with hybrid technologies continuing to make the largest contribution to electrified vehicle uptake. This reflects prevailing market conditions, including affordability considerations, consumer driving patterns, charging infrastructure availability and technology choice.

The continued expansion of the NEV market reinforces **naamsa**'s long-standing position that South Africa's automotive policy framework should remain technology neutral, enabling manufacturers and consumers to adopt the most appropriate low- and zero-emission vehicle technologies as the market evolves. Such an approach will support investment, consumer choice and industrial competitiveness while advancing South Africa's transition towards a lower-carbon and globally competitive automotive industry.

Commenting on the latest market performance, **naamsa** Int. CEO Shinny GOBIYEZA said the results reflect an automotive industry that continues to adapt successfully to changing market conditions while responding to evolving consumer preferences.

"The continued growth in domestic vehicle sales, coupled with record levels of New Energy Vehicle adoption, demonstrates the resilience of South Africa's automotive industry. While export markets remain under pressure from global economic conditions, the domestic market continues to provide an important foundation for industry growth. Equally significant is the accelerating uptake of electrified vehicles across multiple technologies, confirming that South Africa is steadily progressing towards a more diversified and sustainable mobility future."



INFLATION DYNAMICS, MONETARY POLICY, AND MARKET AFFORDABILITY

The acceleration of headline inflation to 5.0% in June 2026 underscores the persistent lag effects of imported cost pressures and broader price increases across the economy. With consumer inflation remaining above the South African Reserve Bank's (SARB) preferred 3% anchor, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintained a cautious stance at its July meeting, leaving the repo rate unchanged at 7.00% (prime lending rate at 10.50%). Although the pause in further interest rate hikes provided policy certainty, financing costs remain elevated and continue to weigh on overall household affordability and vehicle purchasing decisions, particularly in the credit-dependent segments of the market.

The interplay between elevated inflation, the pause in monetary tightening, and the substantial fuel price reductions implemented in July has created a bifurcated consumer environment that is increasingly reshaping retail buying behaviour, as consumers balance affordability constraints against lower operating costs when making vehicle purchasing decisions. This, in turn, is contributing to stronger demand for compact and fuel-efficient passenger vehicles, value-oriented brands, and more flexible and innovative financing solutions. As affordability considerations become more pronounced, vehicle purchasing decisions are being driven not only by upfront acquisition costs but also by total cost of ownership considerations and the availability of innovative financing structures, including extended loan terms and balloon payment arrangements, as households adapt to maintain personal mobility.

Despite persistent macroeconomic headwinds, South Africa's new vehicle market continues to demonstrate notable resilience. **naamsa** will continue to monitor market and economic developments to provide data-driven insights to support strategic decision-making across the automotive industry.

STATEMENT ENDS

ABOUT THE SA AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

- the automotive industry contributes 5.2% to GDP [3.3% manufacturing and 1.9% retail];
- in 2025, the export of vehicles and automotive components reached a record amount of R291.0 billion, equating to 15.6% of South Africa's total exports;
- the industry accounts for 23.8% of the country's manufacturing output;
- vehicles and components are exported to 154 international markets;
- the manufacturing segment employs 113,000 people; and
- combined with multiplier effects, the industry sustains 498,000 jobs across the formal economy.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- Since 2021, **naamsa** introduced associate membership with tangible benefits including industry data access and visibility;
- **naamsa** represents 42 companies manufacturing, assembling, distributing and importing new vehicles;
- Our vision is to be the most credible and respected automotive industry thought leader and partner for a globally competitive and transformed South African auto sector;
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- Website: www.naamsa.co.za, **naamsa** OFFICES: PRETORIA | Monday, August 03, 2026.

