

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | Monday, September 07, 2026

naamsa APPOINTS DR. MNCANE MTHUNZI AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO LEAD THE NEXT ERA OF SOUTH AFRICA'S AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

PRETORIA: Monday, 07 September 2026: naamsa | The Automotive Business Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Mncane MTHUNZI as Chief Executive Officer, effective today, 07 September 2026.

The appointment marks an important new chapter for **naamsa** and comes at a defining moment for South Africa's automotive industry. The global automotive sector is undergoing unprecedented change. The transition towards new energy vehicles, rapid advances in technology, evolving global trade relationships, intensifying competition for investment and the transformation of automotive supply chains are fundamentally reshaping the industry.

Dr MTHUNZI assumes leadership of **naamsa** at this important juncture, with a mandate to serve the collective interests of its members while strengthening the organisation's role as the authoritative and unified voice of South Africa's automotive industry.

naamsa represents a broad membership across the automotive value chain, including local vehicle manufacturers, importers and retailing OEMs, and medium and heavy commercial vehicle manufacturers. This diverse membership gives **naamsa** both the responsibility and mandate to advance the long-term competitiveness, growth and transformation of South Africa's automotive industry.

"This is an important appointment for **naamsa**, our members and the South African automotive industry. We are entering a period that will fundamentally determine the future structure and competitiveness of our sector, and we require strong, decisive and strategic leadership to navigate it," said **naamsa** President, Peter VAN BINSBERGEN.

"Dr MTHUNZI understands the strategic importance of the automotive industry to South Africa. This is an industry that contributes significantly to manufacturing, exports, investment, employment, skills development and economic growth. His mandate is therefore much bigger than leading an industry association. It is about serving our members while helping shape the conditions under which one of South Africa's most important industrial sectors can compete, transform and grow globally."

A CLEAR LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Under Dr MTHUNZI's leadership, **naamsa** will continue to work with its members and intensify its engagement across Government, organised labour, industry partners and the broader automotive ecosystem around a clear set of strategic priorities.

These include:

- strengthening South Africa's global automotive competitiveness and manufacturing footprint;
- securing new investment and protecting existing investment in vehicle and component manufacturing;
- accelerating localisation and the development of a globally competitive automotive supply chain;
- supporting the transition towards new energy vehicles and the technologies of the future;
- expanding export opportunities and strengthening South Africa's position in global automotive value chains;
- developing the skills and capabilities required for the future automotive economy;
- promoting transformation, inclusion and meaningful participation across the automotive value chain; and
- strengthening collaboration between industry, Government, organised labour and other strategic partners to deliver sustainable long-term growth.

The Chief Executive Officer will also be responsible for ensuring that **naamsa** continues to provide credible, evidence-based and authoritative leadership on policy and strategic issues affecting its members and the broader automotive sector.

SOUTH AFRICA MUST COMPETE FOR THE FUTURE

Commenting on his first day as Chief Executive Officer, Dr MTHUNZI said:

"I am honoured to assume the leadership of **naamsa** at such a pivotal moment for our industry. South Africa has built an automotive manufacturing sector of genuine global significance. We have world-class manufacturers, an established supplier and dealership base, highly capable people and a proven export platform.

"But we cannot assume that the successes of the past will automatically secure our future. The global automotive industry is changing rapidly, and South Africa must compete decisively for the investment, technology, skills, markets and opportunities that will define the next generation of mobility.

"My priority will be to ensure that **naamsa** remains a strong, influential and unified voice for its members and the industry, one that engages constructively with Government, challenges where necessary, and advances practical solutions that support investment, growth, transformation and competitiveness."

BUILDING ON INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY

Dr MTHUNZI's assumption of office formally concludes the leadership transition announced by the **naamsa** Board in April 2026, when Shinny GOBIYEZA was appointed Interim Chief Executive Officer to provide continuity and stability while the Board concluded the process of appointing a permanent Chief Executive Officer.

During the interim period, **naamsa** maintained organisational stability and continuity while continuing to advance its strategic priorities, represent the interests of its members and engage key stakeholders on the significant policy, trade, investment and transformation matters confronting the South African automotive industry.



"On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Shinny GOBIYEZA for her leadership as Interim Chief Executive Officer during this important period of transition," said VAN BINSBERGEN.

"Her stewardship ensured organisational stability and continuity while **naamsa** continued to advance its strategic priorities and represent the interests of its members during a particularly consequential period for the automotive industry.

"The Board also extends its appreciation to the executive leadership team and all **naamsa** staff for their commitment and support throughout the transition."

GOBIYEZA resumes her substantive role as Chief Operations Officer of **naamsa**, supporting the Chief Executive Officer and the organisation's broader strategic and operational agenda.

A UNIFIED VOICE FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Under its new Chief Executive Officer, **naamsa** will continue to strengthen engagement with its members while working constructively with Government, organised labour, industry associations, provincial and local government, development institutions and other strategic partners across South Africa's automotive ecosystem.

"The automotive industry cannot navigate this transformation in isolation. We need a shared national ambition and much stronger alignment between industrial policy, investment, infrastructure, skills, energy, trade and market development," said VAN BINSBERGEN.

"**naamsa** will continue to play its part. Our responsibility is to our members and to the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the automotive industry. We are an organisation that not only responds to change but helps lead it."

The appointment of Dr MTHUNZI signals **naamsa**'s commitment to strong institutional leadership, member representation and strategic advocacy as South Africa works to retain and strengthen its position within the rapidly changing global 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 44 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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naamsa OFFICES: PRETORIA | Monday, September 07, 2026.

